

WEEKLY FREE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR



edf ENERGY London and South of England Media Awards

FREE

Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk April 3, 2016

North & West edition No 706

ENVIRONMENT

Cycling revolution

Are we geared up for double the number of bikes?

EDUCATION

Academy status row

Will change divide our classrooms?

NEWS

What Katie did...

Storm spells the end for the Old Man of Kent – the county's tallest tree

CRIME

Murder in the city

Man and woman killed in Canterbury

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Goodbye to the little man who was a comedy giant

FORK handles! Four candles? Classic Two Ronnies' word play that relies on nothing more than the foibles of the English language to generate humour.

There's no swearing, there's no nudity, there's no violence. It is just a funny sketch and do you know what? Kids still get the joke.

They love puns and rhymes and all the other simple tricks our beautiful language has given us.

When I was a kid, I laughed at that sketch on the telly on a Saturday night. As a grown up I now appreciate the cleverness and simplicity of the joke. F U N E X anyone?

Of course now my laughter will be tinged with sadness at the passing of Ronnie Corbett, who was a friend of the county – with a holiday home in Broadstairs.

His comedy partner Ronnie Barker and he, along with Eric and Ernie, and Tommy Cooper helped define a generation's sense of humour.

Now it may not be to my wife's taste but I truly hope my children will take something from my love of word play.

Ronnie Corbett has been universally mourned as a comedy giant and as a true gentleman – a genuinely nice chap, who had time for everybody and always wore a smile.

He valued his fans, appreciated their affection and genuinely liked meeting them. 'He had time for everyone' the tributes kept repeating.

I wonder how many of today's celebrities fall into the same category?

Additionally, I hope you enjoy this week's KoS as we look at the latest news from around the county as well as featuring the growing trend for camping out in a church.

We also look at plans to boost cycling and carry two different stories featuring some very brave men indeed.

Enjoy your weekend.

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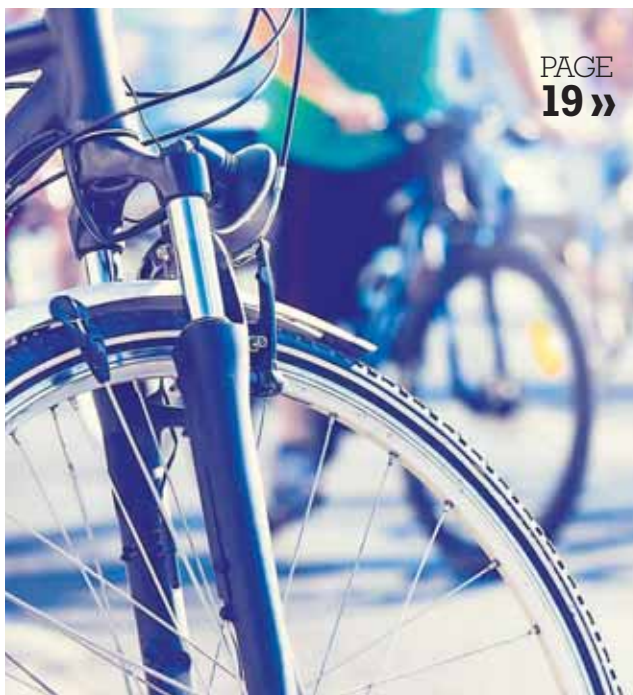
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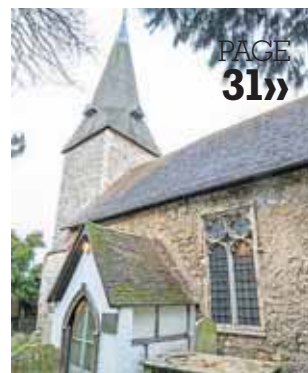
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Campaigners warn of academy school divide

By Luke May

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PLANS to force all state schools to convert to academies will create "an even wider gulf" in the county's secondary schools, a campaign group has announced.

Kent Education Network (KEN) claims academy groups, will "cherry pick" secondary schools depending on their performance as schools are converted in the next four years.

The change would see schools receive funding directly from the government rather than the local authority.

Each academy has to follow the same rules on admissions, special education needs and exclusions as state schools.

Head of Research at KEN, Dr Michael Collins, said: "The government's proposals are deeply unpopular with teachers, parents and local authorities.

"The planned changes are likely to bring even deeper divisions between our children.

"There is a shortage of academy chains which can only mean successful trusts fighting over



OSBORNE: The chancellor of the exchequer announced academy plans during March's budget

popular and successful schools, while troubled schools will be left with any trust willing to take them on."

During the announcement, Dr Collins also voiced his concerns over the current "divide" between Kent's schools.

"The education divide in Kent is already a serious problem: a quarter of children who fail the Kent Test end up in schools classed by Ofsted as 'requiring improve-

ment', yet every child who passes the eleven-plus is assured of a good school. The gap can only get wider as ambitious academy trusts refuse to take on Kent's struggling schools because the trusts themselves will in future be ranked by means of league tables."

The announcement to change all schools in the country to academies came in last month's budget.

In the announcement the chancellor of the exchequer George

Osborne said: "Providing great schooling is the single most important thing we can do to help any child from a disadvantaged background succeed.

"It's the single most important thing we can do to boost the productivity of our economy.

"I am providing extra funding so by 2020 every primary and secondary school will be, or be in the process of becoming, an academy."

Children's homes in the county visited 2,600 times by police

CHILDREN'S homes in Kent have been visited by Kent police more than 2,600 times since 2013, it was revealed today.

The Howard League for Penal Reform revealed children living in homes are being criminalised at a much higher rate compared with others their age.

Among 13 to 15-year-olds, children living in homes are almost six times as likely to be criminalised as looked after children in other placements and almost 20 times more likely than a child not in care.

The charity suggests there is a problem with the current care system in England and Wales, leading to staff calling the police over minor incidents. Findings have been published in a report from charity, Criminal Care - Children's Homes and Criminalising Children.

The report states: "Levels of criminalisation of children in children's homes increase dramatically between the ages of 13 and 15.

"The children who are being criminalised whilst teenagers are the same children who, when younger, were sympathetically viewed as vulnerable, innocent and highly deserving of society's help and protection.

"There appears to be a 'tipping point' around the age of 13, at which time these children lose society's sympathy and, rather than being helped, they are pushed into the criminal justice system."

Frances Crook, chief executive of the Howard League for Penal Reform, said: "These children have been taken into care because they are in dire need and their parents cannot, or will not, look after them.

"They are wonderful young people who have had a really bad start in life. They deserve every chance to flourish. Private companies, charities and local authorities that are paid a fortune by the taxpayer should give these children what they need and deserve."

Successful Ashford actor is nominated for Bafta award

ASHFORD-born actor Mark Rylance has been nominated for best leading actor at this year's Bafta TV awards.

The 56-year old was born in the county before his family moved to America, where he was raised.

Mr Rylance - who recently won the best supporting actor Oscar for his role in Steven Spielberg movie Bridge of Spies - has been

nominated for his role in BBC drama Wolf Hall.

Set in Tudor England, the show is an adaptation of two of Hilary Mantel's novels - Wolf Hall and Bring Up The Bodies.

Mr Rylance plays Thomas Cromwell - King Henry VIII's chief minister.

The Bafta TV awards will be taking place on May 8.

Fifty firefighters tackled a 'deep-seated' Ashford blaze

FIFTY firefighters tackled a deep-seated blaze at a scrap yard on Ellingham Industrial Estate in Ashford on Thursday (March 31).

Three main jets were used to tackle the blaze, with additional water supplies provided via a bulk water carrier, hydrant and by using special pumps to take water from a nearby open water source.

Kent Fire and Rescue Service

faced challenging conditions as the deep-seated fire involved scrap metal, cars and tyres, which made getting access to the source of the blaze difficult. Mechanical machinery was used to break up the stack and stop the blaze from spreading.

Eight fire engines were called to the scene, and residents were advised to keep windows closed.



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Sheerness motorcyclist in hospital after crash

A MOTORCYCLIST is in a critical but stable condition after a crash on the M2 on Wednesday (March 30).

At around 5pm a green Kawasaki motorcycle was involved in a crash with a black Lexus and a Mercedes lorry. The rider of the bike, a man in his 20s from Sheerness, suffered multiple injuries.

He was airlifted to hospital from the scene of the

crash, just beyond the slip road where traffic joins from junction four.

Sergeant Hannah Brown said: "We already have a number of eyewitness to what happened, but I urge anyone who saw this collision, who has yet to contact us, to please do so as soon as possible on 01622 798538, quoting reference AH/55/16."



AWARDS: Past winner, Dev Biswal

Entries for this year's awards open

NOMINATIONS are now open for this year's Kent Life and Kent on Sunday's Food and Drink Awards.

The awards were first launched in 2013, with the aim of celebrating the county's food and drink industry.

The businesses will be nominated by the readers of Kent on Sunday and our sister publication Kent Life.

There are a number of different categories including pub of the year, customer service of the year and newcomer of the year.

Previous winners have included Dev Biswal from The Ambrette - which has restaurants located in Margate and Canterbury - who was nominated chef of the year in 2015.

Nominations are open now and will be closing on August 7.

The finalists will be invited to an awards ceremony that takes place on October 17 at the Ashford International Hotel, where the winners will be announced.

For further information about the different award categories turn to pages 46 and 47, where you will also find the nomination form.

Completed forms can be sent back to us at Food and Drink Awards 2016, Archant Kent, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP.

Chatham special needs school slammed in damning Ofsted report

By Luke May

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THE LEADERSHIP of a free school for special needs children in Medway has been branded inadequate in an Ofsted report.

Inspire Free Special School in Chatham was rated as inadequate in all categories, including quality of teaching, outcomes for pupils and personal development, behaviour and welfare.

In the report published by the schools regulatory body, investigators criticised the leadership at the school.

It said: "Leadership at all levels is inadequate. The principal and other leaders have not secured effective provision in key areas, such as the quality of teaching and pupils' personal development and welfare."

The report also highlighted a lack of staff causing the school's decline: "The absence of staff in key positions mean that the headteacher has no support to stop or tackle the recent



OFSTED: Sir Michael Wilshaw

decline in standards."

The quality of work given to students was challenge by Ofsted, who claimed pupils at the secondary school were not challenged and had poor attitudes to their learning.

Exclusions at the school are considered to be "higher than is typical and are increasing".

A spokesperson from the school said: "We are clearly disappointed with the findings of the Ofsted inspection which took place as the school was preparing to move to a new sponsor as we, and our governing body, had already identified that we needed extra support."

"The school had a very successful year after opening in 2014. We are very proud of the work we do with some of Medway's most vulnerable children and, as Ofsted notes, staff care about the students and our arrangements for safeguarding are effective."

"The school is already acting to address Ofsted's finding and, even though the school does not transfer to its new sponsor until April, we have been working with them since the inspection."

"The school and its governors have a shared confidence that we will soon be in a very different place now we have support."

Iconic comedy star Ronnie Corbett dies

RENOWNED entertainer Ronnie Corbett, who had a holiday home in Broadstairs, died on Thursday (March 31) aged 85.

His publicist said he was 'surrounded by family'.

Mr Corbett was well-known for comedy sketch show The Two Ronnies, which he performed with Ronnie Barker.

He had a holiday home in Broadstairs, near to H.E. Harrington's general ironmonger business. Mr Barker is said to have been inspired to write his Four Candles sketch after visiting his friend.

Mr Corbett also supported Last Chance Animal Rescue, adopting dogs from the Edenbridge centre and opening the New Romney centre with his wife Anne last year.

A statement on their website read: "Our thoughts go out to Anne and the family of dear Ronnie Corbett. Both he and Anne were very good friends of our charity and we will miss Ronnie very much, he was both a huge star and a true gentleman."

Two protests set to take place in Dover

KENT Police said that they would "build on previous experiences" as they prepared for two separate protests in Dover on Saturday (April 2).

In January, far-right and anti-fascist protesters clashed in the Kent town, which resulted in more than 30 arrests.

Two protests were set to take place in Dover - one from the far-right and the other from Kent Anti-Racism Network (KARN) at the weekend.

Assistant chief constable Neil Jerome said: "I want to reassure residents, visitors and businesses in the town that we are working with our partners and organisers, to build upon previous experiences, to minimum disruption to the local community and economy."

A KARN spokesperson said: "Dover has a proud history of standing up to fascism and we want to celebrate our open and welcoming community."

"Kent Anti Racism Network is therefore organising a small convoy of aid to Calais as well as organising a protest on April 2."

Warning issued after wave of scam emails

RESIDENTS in Kent are being warned of the latest wave of scam emails landing in people's inboxes.

The unsolicited emails urge recipients to set up a direct debit and pay their council tax online.

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council received a report from a concern resident who had received the email.

In the email, the fraudster urges residents to click on a link to pay their council tax online.

Sharon Shelton, the council's director of finance and transformation, said: "This is the latest in a range of scams aimed at tricking people to part with their bank details and their cash."

"Council tax payments are collected by the council only, not central government."

"Our officers never email or telephone residents to ask them to confirm their bank details and we are urging residents to be extremely wary of these unscrupulous individuals who may use a variety of tactics to try to get them to part with personal details or money."

Victims of crime are given six new help centres across Kent

By Luke May

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SIX new 'compass points' helping to support victims of crime have been set up across Kent.

The helpdesks have been developed by independent charity Victim Support.

Police and crime commissioner Ann Barnes awarded the charity a three-year contract, to offer help to thousands more victims in the county.

The helpdesks will begin operating in Dover, Gravesend, Maidstone, Strood, Margate and Tunbridge Wells from Monday (April 4).

They will each be open for two hours a week and are available for walk ins or with an appointment.

Visitors will be able to get help and advice from Victim Support staff and volunteers, as well as receiving safety items such as personal alarms and home protection devices where required.

Kultar Nayyar, services director at Victim Support, said: "We have developed compass points to offer an entirely new and simple way for people to access services they need as a victim of crime and to break down barriers to reaching support.

"Each compass point will be hosted by



SUPPORT: Ann Barnes and Kultar Nayyar

staff and volunteers with localised knowledge, who are trained to offer support tailored to meet the needs of every individual. This new service will enhance the work we already do across Kent and increase our visibility in local communities."

Victims will be able to use the compass points even if they have not reported their crime to the police.

PCC Ann Barnes said: "I made a commitment to put victims and witnesses of crime at the heart of everything we do here in Kent

and last year we successfully launched the county's first victims and witness help and advice centre, Compass House, in Ashford.

"More than 53,000 victims of crime have been offered help since then.

"Now we're building on our work with Victim Support by launching these new compass points so that even more victims have access to the help they need closer to home - and offering a more personal face-to-face service rather than online or over the phone."

National Living Wage comes into force

THE NEW National Living Wage comes into force on Friday for employers across the UK.

Workers aged 25 or over and not in the first year of an apprenticeship must now be paid at least £7.20 an hour by their employer.

The change is 50p higher than the current minimum wage for those aged 21 and over.

The Office for National Statistics claims workers aged 25 to 29 and over 60s will be impacted most.

Truck fire causes long delays on A2

MOTORISTS faced delays on the A2 on Thursday after a small truck caught fire at the junction with Shepherds Lane in Dartford.

The blaze near Dartford Heath was met by emergency services during the rush hour at around 5.30pm. Crews took an hour to bring the fire under control.

Commuter car park

SEVENOAKS residents are being invited to voice their opinions on a proposed car park, to replace an existing one to set to be demolished to make room for a hotel.

The district council has put in an application to change its existing 216 space Bradbourne car park to cater for 430 vehicles, to make room for users of Sennocke Car Park and commuters.



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Canterbury man charged following double murder

A 53-YEAR-old man charged with the murder of two people in Canterbury this week has been remanded in custody.

Foster Christian, of Dickens Avenue, was charged with the double murder of 47-year-old Simon Gorecki and 40-year-old Natasha Sadler on Thursday.

He appeared before Medway Magistrates' Court via a video link on 1 April and was remanded in custody until Tuesday 5 April, when he will appear before Maidstone Crown Court.

Police were called to a home in Dickens Avenue, on Tuesday following reports of an altercation.

Christian, who police say was known to the victims, was arrested at the scene.

Following the incident, a



16-year-old boy and 20-year-old man were both treated in hospital.

Christian has also been charged with two counts of GBH.

Additionally, 35-year-old Naomi Toro, of Keyworth Mews, Canter-

bury has been charged with assisting an offender and was due to appear at Dover Magistrates' Court on Saturday.

An 18-year-old woman has been released on bail.

Police arrest two men in Biddenden murder case

POLICE have arrested two men on suspicion of the murder of a widowed pensioner in Biddenden earlier this month.

Roy Blackman, 73, was found dead at his home in Headcorn Road shortly before 9am on Monday March 21, before a post-mortem examination the next day revealed he died as a result of multiple blunt force injuries.

In the early hours of Thursday, police arrested two 36-year-old men from Cranbrook on suspicion of murder. Both remain in custody.

Last week, a 49-year-old man who was arrested on suspicion of the murder was released on bail until Thursday, April 28.

Neighbours of the retired businessman admitted that Mr Blackman's residence was one

of a number of homes targeted by burglars in recent years and expressed their shock at the death of a popular man.

Adrian Lidgett, of the Biddenden Neighbourhood Watch, told KoS: "We're very surprised at the news, he was a well liked man, very polite and caring."

"Unfortunately he had suffered some break ins over the years, I'm afraid it goes on everywhere. But he was very well liked."

"His wife died several years ago and he was a liked business man who ran a garage in the village, though he'd retired since then."

Anyone with any information is asked to contact the Kent and Essex serious crime directorate on 01303 289600.

New microchipping laws

MICROCHIPPING law changes will be coming into effect on Wednesday (April 6).

Under the Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015 law, all dogs must be microchipped by the time they are eight-weeks-old.

Check local vets and pet shops for details.

Family escape blaze

A FAMILY-of-four escaped a fire in their caravan on Friday morning.

The mother was woken by the blaze and managed to help her children and partner to escape the caravan, which was parked in Shottendane Road, Birchington.

The caravan was destroyed in the fire.

Pent Valley protest

A MARCH is set to be held today (Saturday) by protesters voicing concerns against the proposed closure of Pent Valley Technology College in Cheriton, near Folkestone.

Parents, pupils, staff and union activists will meet at noon at Cheriton's Post Office, then head to the school's gates.

City robber's plea

A CANTERBURY robber who asked his victim to give him 20 minutes to get away has been jailed for five and half years.

Scott Barham, of Beckett Avenue, was spotted by the victim in her bedroom. He stole cash and phones before running away, but was stopped by police minutes later.

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For STUDIO

For HOME

For AMBIENT

Top Three Stories



1. Tributes to Ronnie C

Kent's tributes to late Ronnie Corbett

2. Broadstairs rescue

Two people saved from incoming tide

3. 'Old Man' could go

Storm Katie's damage felt across Kent

The Essential Guide:



... to Manston Airport

All the information you need to know on the past and future of the site.



FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY: Work continues inside Gravesend's indoor market hall. Closed since last year, the historic market has received more than £1.8million of investment to redevelop the site, as work progresses, the council hopes to reopen the site before Christmas.

Missed last week's...

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Top Three Blogs



1. Etiquette problems

Show gratitude when someone holds the door

2. TV series shows its bite

How zombie TV series returned to form

3. Beards bid bye-bye?

The rise and apparent fall of facial hair

Food & Drink Awards 2016... have you voted?



Turn to pages 48 & 49

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Katie leaves her mark on county

Storm Katie swept into the county over the Easter weekend and left her mark by leaving many without electricity and scattering rubbish bins and fence panels but she also claimed a high profile victim – the Old Man of Kent, our tallest tree. **Luke May** reports...

STRONG winds battered much of the county across Easter Sunday and Monday last weekend, with widespread disruption to roads, rails and garden furniture.

Gusts were recorded at up to 70 miles per hour as Storm Katie came to Kent.

While there were no reported injuries in the county during the storm, fallen trees, damaged property, power outages and boats coming loose with passengers on board meant the effects of Storm Katie had a lasting effect.

With the brunt of the storm hitting during the morning, emergency services were out in force across the county to deal with a range of incidents.

A Kent Fire and Rescue Service spokesperson said: "Fire crews have had a busy morning responding to weather-related incidents following a storm this morning.

"Most callouts were to make the scene safe after damage to property."

Apart from the expected call outs of roof tiles slipping and chimneys falling, three people had to be saved from the River Medway after a boat came loose from its mooring in Tonbridge.

Elsewhere a flat roof had become detached in Elmfield Close Gravesend, while signs had to be secured by fire services using height vehicles in Margate.

A wooden stable block had blown over onto an embankment of the A228 in Hoo was dismantled by Kent Fire and Rescue Service crews.

In Cuxton, a trampoline was blown onto a road causing some delays.

Throughout most of Monday both the Sheppey Crossing and QEII bridge were closed to traffic, with the latter having knock-on effects on the M25.

Traffic heading clockwise suffered delays of up to an hour after one of the northbound tunnels was closed to be used as a diversion for southbound traffic.

Kent's 'A' roads were not with ex-

ception from the damage, with falling trees and flooding closing roads in Tunbridge Wells, Canterbury and Challock, near Faversham.

Among the victims of the falling trees could be the famous Old Man of Kent.

The county's tallest tree, standing at nearly 50 metres tall could be removed following damage from the storm.

As Katie's winds howled, branches from the tree were blown to the ground.

Branches from the grand silver fir, abies grandis, were found to be diseased.

Following the discovery, site operators will now discuss whether the aging tree may have to be removed from the area.

Site inspections at the 2,000-acre Bedgebury National Pinetum and Forest, near Goudhurst revealed damage to several trees as well as the Old Man.

Patrick West, Bedgebury manager said: "The damage to trees following storms like Katie just goes to reinforce why the work that we carry out here at Bedgebury is so important for the international conservation of conifers."

The National Pinetum also suffered damage to some its original trees dating back to the 1920s.

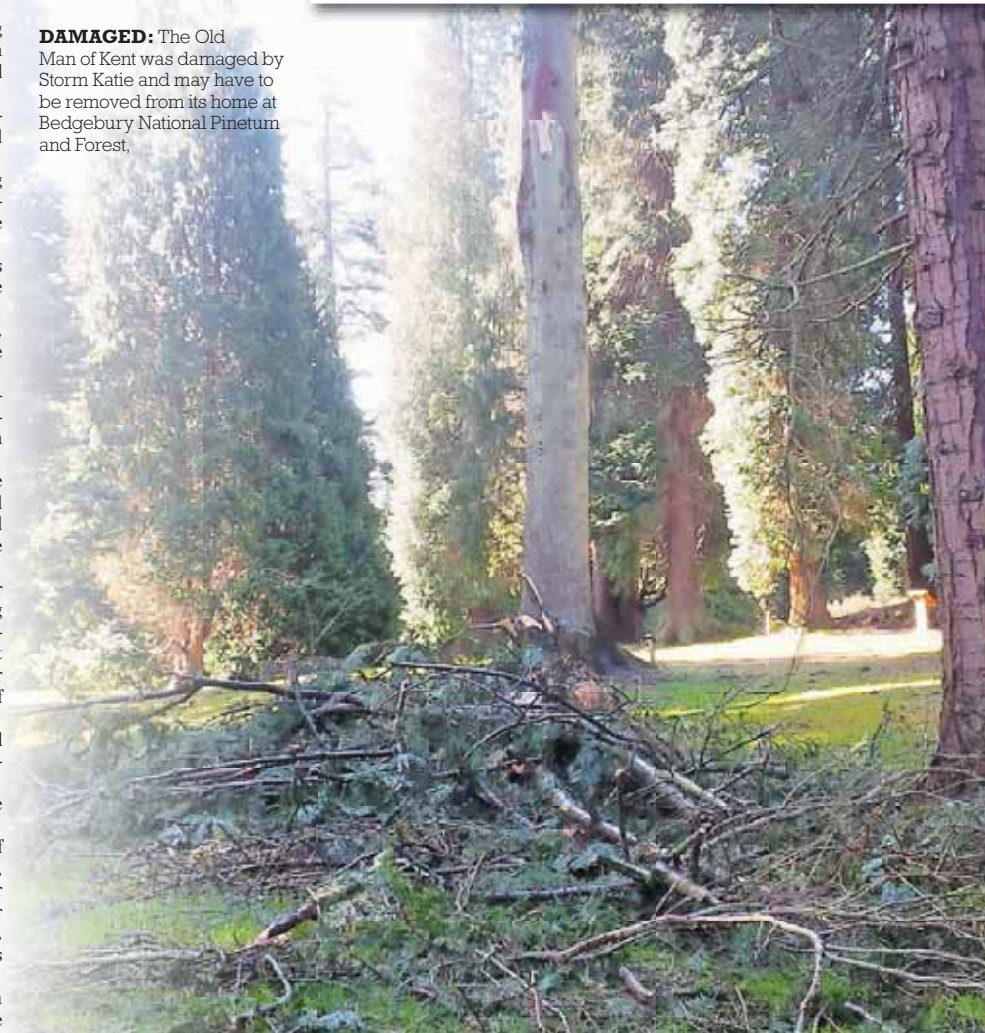
On Monday, the area had to be closed off to the public for its safety.

Mr West said: "The enjoyment of our visitors is very important to us, but our first concern is always their safety, so following the storm our team worked very hard to check, clear and re-open the site as soon as was physically possible."

Cross-channel ferries were drawn to a halt after high winds closed the Port of Dover in the morning, but services resumed at around lunchtime.

Resulting damage to trees and power lines meant large parts of the county were left without power.

DAMAGED: The Old Man of Kent was damaged by Storm Katie and may have to be removed from its home at Bedgebury National Pinetum and Forest.



Thousands were left without power for most of the day as the service tried to cope with power outages in all parts of the county.

Areas in Swanley, Whitstable, Gravesend and Maidstone are among those to have reportedly suffered power cuts.

UK Power Networks, responsible for electricity in the south east and east of England says it received 100,000 calls from across its patch during the storm.

A spokesperson said: "Electricity was restored to the 100,000 properties affected by power cuts caused by Storm Katie.

"UK Power Networks answered over 22,000 customer calls and sent 25,000 text updates on Monday (March 28), while hundreds of engineers worked to repair

North & West

damage to overhead lines.

"By bringing in extra teams we managed to quickly complete all storm repairs in the East of England by Monday night and most in the South East.

"We kept people updated about progress to restore supplies, by text and phone calls where we had their details."

Rail services already faced delays as Network Rail carried out engineering work across Kent, but as trees fell onto lines rail services in west Kent faced delays.

The line between Tunbridge Wells and Hastings was closed, with severe disruptions while there were also closures between Sevenoaks and Tonbridge.

Disruption meant rail services heading from Sevenoaks to Ashford

were also delayed. A spokesperson from Southeastern said: "Storm Katie caused disruption on Monday morning with trees and debris being blown onto the railway track.

"Network Rail worked to remove the trees and clear the debris as soon as possible. Some earlier services were affected, but the situation had started to improve by mid-afternoon."

Storm Katie was the 11th storm to hit the UK to be named by the Met Office.

It travelled north east from the Bay of Biscay on the western coast of France, landing on the south coast of England.

Once Katie hit the coast, strong winds and heavy rains lasted throughout the early hours of the morning until the early afternoon.

Week ending April 3, 2016 **11**



Consultation on crossing closes... but what next?

The Dartford Crossing's traffic issues and environmental impact have caused concern for years and when, finally, a consultation was announced on another Lower Thames Crossing its proposals saw neighbouring boroughs pitched against each other. **Luke May** takes a look at the story so far...

AFTER two months of consulting, the public's window of opportunity to voice opinions on a crossing east of Gravesend shut last week.

Option C was suggested as Highways England's recommended route for a new Lower Thames Crossing - to both alleviate the current problems at Dartford but also cope with the predicted levels of transport growth in the future.

Built to work alongside the crossing at Dartford, the proposal would see a new road built from the start of the M2 heading north through the Gravesham countryside, where an underground tunnel would then cross the Thames.

From there a road would be built to connect to existing roads in Essex, with a new junction built in Ockendon to join on to the M25 between junction 29 and junction 30.

Calls for a new crossing have been made for some time, with Dartford the only Thames crossing east of London.

In 2009, a report called for a second crossing to help ease congestion at Dartford during peak times.

The consultation saw firm opposition from locals and villages in the Gravesham countryside as well as celebrity intervention and even a high profile cabinet resignation.

Below is a complete timeline of the key events this consultation witnessed:

January 26 – The Highways England Option C consultation officially gets under way, with Highways England declaring a route through the Gravesham countryside past villages of Shorne and Chalk as its "preferred option".

January 31 – Anti-option C campaigners Abridge2far write a letter to the leader of Kent County Council, Paul Carter, urging him to remove his support for the crossing.

February 8 – Gravesham Rural's Kent County Council representative Bryan Sweetland steps down from county council cabinet post claiming the development would cause "the worst devastation in the area since the last world war."

February 10 – A Kent and Medway economic group support the crossing east of Gravesend.

Formed of business representatives, education representatives and



QE II BRIDGE: Since it opened the crossing - bridge and tunnel - has been controversial



TUNNEL: This is how Option C could look, with the road diving into a tunnel before plunging under the Thames

councillors from across Kent and Medway, Kent and Medway Economic Partnership (KMEP) board members voted overwhelmingly in favour of the move.

Chairman Geoff Miles said: "Kent and Medway are the gateway to Europe."

To empower businesses to operate effectively in the South East, it is essential for new capacity to be added to the road network."

February 22 – KCC Leader Paul Carter continues to back crossing east of Gravesend. In a letter to campaigners against the tunnel, Mr Carter wrote: "I am still of the view that in the right location, a new Lower Thames Crossing to the east of Gravesend has the potential to relieve congestion at the current Dartford Crossing, create greater

network resilience and most impor-

tantly, create a step change in the economic output of the area."

A study by consultants KMPG estimated a crossing in this location would contribute £12.7bn to the local economy and create 6,000 new jobs"

February 22 – Gravesham Borough Council draws £150,000 from its reserve funds to continue its fight against proposals.

February 23 – Transport minister Patrick McLoughlin says the government is not ruling out the possibility of a crossing at Dartford (Option A) during meeting with local Gravesham figures. Following the meeting, Gravesham council leader John Cubitt said: "The minister said he wanted to put on record that Option A is still absolutely on the table."

February 27 – Protesters from Shorne, Chalk, Higham join other anti-Option C campaigners at protest in Community Square, Gravesend, with Mr Cubitt, local MP Adam Holloway, Abridge2far campaigner Bob Lane and reverend at St Mary's Church in Chalk, Nigel Bourne, all speaking to the crowd.

March 8 – The last in a series of public consultation events in Kent, Essex and south east London is held in Rochester, with more than 13,000 people attending the events.

March 10 – Panel of pro and anti Option C campaigners, including Highways England senior project manager Martin Potts hold debate in Shorne Village Hall, hosted by BBC Radio Kent's John Warnett and Maggie Doyle.

During the debate, protesters call the consultation "biased" claiming it

did not give enough opportunity to voice support for option A.

At the debate, Mr Sweetland said: "'It's just ridiculous. I've done quite a few consultations over the years and I've never seen one that's quite so biased as this one."

"I just think the whole thing has been handled very poorly and I agree it is like a sales brochure for option C."

March 15 – Celebrity activist Russell Brand joins the debate. The Thurock-born comedian slams proposals, calling option C a "terrible, terrible plan".

March 15 – As environmental voices mount against the crossing, the Woodland Trust claims both proposed routes for option C would cause "irreversible damage" to up to five ancient woodlands in the area.

Oliver Newham from the trust said: "'Surveys show these woods are incredibly valuable; home to badgers, rare orchids and all three species of woodpecker which breed in the UK."

"It also highlights a further flaw in the planning process, with one proposal set to result in the loss of the very woodland planted to compensate for destruction of a previous ancient woodland – you couldn't make it up."

March 24 – The consultation closes with nearly 30,000 online responses.

But what happens now? A decision on any new crossing is now in the hands of the secretary of state for transport, Patrick McLoughlin, with an announcement on the government's decision not expected until later this year.



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12 Week ending April 3, 2016



LEADER: KCC's Paul Carter



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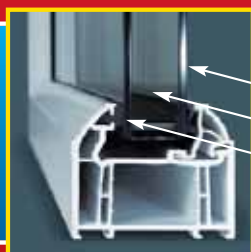
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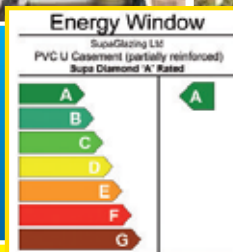
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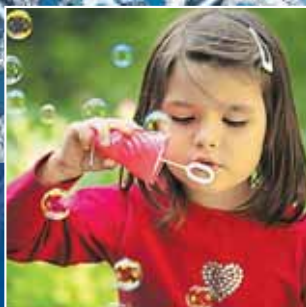
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Festival grew out of ban on house parties

It started as a typical act of teenage rebellion and has now manifested itself into one of the biggest independent music festivals in the country. **Tom Pyman** finds out about LeeFest...

YOU may have seen the advert for LeeFest that has recently occupied a prime slot before the screening of blockbuster films at cinemas.

The independent festival has become something of a phenomenon in recent years, gaining mainstream acclaim when it won 'Best Grassroots Festival' at the UK Festival Awards and 'Best Festival' at the Association of Independent Music Awards.

Its connection with Kent is long-standing, having been staged at a variety of venues around the county over the years, and as it celebrates its tenth anniversary this summer at a top secret location near Tunbridge Wells, its appeal is arguably greater than ever.

Founder Lee Denny told KoS how it all began in his Beckenham back garden: "My parents went on holiday one summer when I was 16, and had just finished my GCSEs.

"They left me and my friends one rule: no house parties.

"So being 16, we thought it would be genius if we were to have a festival in the back gar-

den, because technically that wasn't a house party.

"It took us about a week to organise and get friends and local bands involved.

"Through word of mouth we ultimately got about 150 people attending, which is quite a lot for a back garden.

"It snowballed from there really - we decided to do it again the next year and 300 people turned up.

"The next year it was 600 on a school field so it carried on growing with more and more people wanting to come, which led us to the tenth year at a new venue."

The festival has helped launch the careers of a number of acts who have gone on to extraordinary success: London Grammar, Bastille, Years & Years, Clean Bandit and Jack Garratt to name but a few.

"We have always been focussed on introducing new music by giving them a great place to play and supporting their careers," Mr Denny said.

"We're not taking any credit for how their

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EVOLUTION: LeeFest began in a back garden and has now grown into a hugely popular music festival. Out pictures from over a number of years include one of organiser Lee Denny (far right) from 2011 and (right) Lianne La Havas, who will be headlining this year's event



careers have panned out but it's nice to be able to say they played here early on and that the hard work is helping."

Mr Denny is keen to emphasise that it is 'we'

and not 'I' and that it has been a concerted team effort to get the festival to where it is today.

Four people are employed full time in the office, while another 20 get involved part time.

As the event draws closer, he says that number grows and grows and on the day it takes as many as 300 people to make the festival safe and successful.

"I wouldn't like to personally be seen as an inspiration but the team definitely is, because it's so much bigger than just me.

Continued on page 16

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Continued on page 16

"We didn't have a grand idea at the outset, but we just knew we loved music and arts and didn't want to accept that the world had to be the way it was, so we started making stuff happen."

The Android advert has undoubtedly helped raise the profile of the festival, but Mr Denny admits he never knew quite how big an impact it would have.

"They were looking for inspirational stories of young people doing something exciting, so we agreed to it and then made the film with them," he said.

"They didn't tell us quite how far it would go so the first time I saw it was when I went to see Star Wars.

"I came in late in a yellow coat, and was trying to squeeze down a row and suddenly it's on the big screen and everyone's looking at me.

"When I started out and just thought 'let's call it LeeFest,' I didn't really expect to be reaching seven million views on YouTube."

While some headliners, including folk and soul singer Lianne La Havas, for this year's festival – titled Neverland – have been announced, there is a real element of secrecy about it that Mr Denny is keen to maintain.

"We've kept it secret because it's fun," he said.

"It makes it feel special, plus it's useful for security in that you only want the right



kind of people to know.

"We're expecting about 5,000 people this year.

"It may seem from the outside that it's grown massively overnight but over 10 years it's not quite as big and scary as it seems.

"There's a real sense of community because everyone gets to know one another.

"There are not many festivals that are that small and putting on nationally renowned artists.

"The intimacy is good - it's what makes the festival unique I suppose - and there's an attitude of making the most of life by making friends and engaging with new music.

"I know some other festivals struggle, and I think like anything that becomes very fash-

ionable, you get some people who come into the industry for the wrong reasons.

"They're looking to just make money and their focus is not on creating a great time for people attending.

"That then makes it harder for them to survive."

After a decade of success, Mr Denny is keen to continue the festival's growth, but doing so while keeping the intimate charm that made it so appealing in the first place is a challenge.

"There's always an element of taking each time as it comes," he said.

"We sit down after each one and say 'shall we do it again?'

"It's important to keep that organic growth - and we're very focused on why we started the

event and we always try and come up with new, fresh ideas to make it bigger and better each year.

"For us it's not just about putting up another stage or another tent with some old stuff in it - we are creating a special kingdom for people to explore, places for people to go and find, so hopefully they'll never find it stale or boring.

"When we took a year off we tried to reimagine the whole concept, and that's where we came up with Neverland.

"The big difference between now and when we started is that I never used to get stressed.

"I have had to learn about running a business, which is something you never really think about when you're 16."

LeeFest will run this year from July 28-30.



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Geared up for cycling revolution?

The government – and its transport minister – wants us all to get on our bikes to reduce congestion on the roads, boost our fitness and fight pollution. **Simon Allin** talks to a Kent cycling entrepreneur about whether the county is geared up for change...

A NEW government plan to create a long-term strategy for walking and cycling has been welcomed by a Kent cycling entrepreneur.

Last weekend transport minister Robert Goodwill announced plans to double cycling, reverse the decline in walking and improve the safety of cyclists.

The aim of the new approach is to ensure getting around by bike or on foot is the natural choice for shorter journeys by 2040.

'Safe and attractive' infrastructure is to be provided to help achieve this goal, with local bodies given the authority to come up with solutions that meet the needs of their areas.

Adrian Oliver, who runs the Free-wheel Pub in Graveney, supports the need for a long-term approach to improve cycling infrastructure in the county.

He told Kent on Sunday: "Cycling infrastructure in Kent is not as good as in other areas.

"There is no strategy behind the development of infrastructure in Kent and it is poorly maintained, so we don't have good infrastructure at the moment.

"There are lots of admirable programmes suggested but there is not the funding behind it.

"There is a need for more investment in running the infrastructure and a need for a more long-term approach."

Mr Oliver is also the founder of Kent-based CyclingAge, the organisation that delivers Bikeability for children in schools around Kent, as well as adult cycling training.

He pointed out that boosting the number of cyclists would pay dividends by reducing the burden on local infrastructure.

"It would make such a difference in Kent, where we do not have the healthiest population," he explained. "We need to take that cost out of the NHS and a healthier population will do that really easily."

Government figures support this analysis. If Danish levels of cycling were to be achieved in the UK, it is estimated that this would save the NHS £17 billion within ten years.

kentnews.co.uk kent-life.co.uk

Other areas of the country, such as London and Manchester, have seen significant investment in cycle routes in recent years.

Work is already underway in these cities to create segregated cycleways, which protect cyclists from other traffic more effectively than traditional cycle lanes.

"Separating cyclists from the main traffic is so important - but there is not the political will in Kent to do it, which is a shame," said Mr Oliver.

"It does not take a lot of money to do this - it is about the political will."

British successes in the Tour de France and the Olympics have helped to raise the profile of cycling in recent years, introducing more people to a sport that had previously been overlooked.

Despite these successes, the UK has a long way to go before it catches up with countries such as Germany and the Netherlands, where cycling is a much bigger part of the culture.

According to a 2013 survey by the European Commission, only four per cent of the UK said they cycled every day, compared to 43 per cent of the Dutch population.

Mr Oliver said he had noticed a rise in the number of people cycling following the success of the UK's athletes on the world stage.

"Yorkshire went for the Tour de France and there is a great atmosphere there now, which is encouraging people to get on their bikes - and that gets the politicians going," he explained.

"I think it is certain that the success in Beijing and in London has done a tremendous amount for cycling and there has been an increase in the past few years.

"As a result of the money going in from the National Lottery, we started winning things, which was great.

"To win the Tour de France twice in the last five years is incredible, so there has been an increase. We just have to keep going."

A consultation has been launched by the government seeking views on its new strategy, and people are able to submit their responses until May 25.



STRATEGY: transport minister Robert Goodwill (above) has announced plans to double cycling, reverse the decline in walking and improve the safety of cyclists.

FREEWHEEL - PUB AND WORKSHOP



FREEWHEEL: Adrian Oliver outside his Graveney pub

THE Free-wheel in Graveney is a pub with a difference - it comes with a fully-equipped bicycle workshop offering repairs and services.

Puncture repair, spoke replacement and gear service are among the services on offer at this unique venue, situated between the North Downs and the Kent Coast.

"It started off because we needed another workshop for people to come and have their bikes serviced, and I couldn't find anywhere on the high street that was the right sort of place," owner Adrian Oliver explained.

"Someone mentioned that a pub had been shut for a while, and it made the perfect building."

Combining the needs of the community with those of cyclists passing through has made the business viable at a time when pubs are closing at a fast rate.

"It has been brilliant. It was never an ambition of mine to run a pub, but the community has helped to make it into a proper pub again, and the cycling community have helped to make it sustainable.

"It takes time to get these

things known about but with social media it is quicker to get the message across, and traditional media helps too.

"We are having our first birthday party on May bank holiday. We will have a garden party on the Monday, with bands coming, including Big Orange Head from Whitstable."

Mr Oliver's passion for cycling began at a young age, but he cycled less and less when he became a commuter.

"Then I started working from home and commuting with my kids to school on their bikes, and that is when I realised no-one else was doing it. So one day I rang Kent County Council and they encouraged me to do something about it.

Mr Oliver, 49, became a fully qualified Bikeability instructor, and the Free-wheel marks his latest attempt to raise the profile of cycling.

"We get all sorts of people coming to the pub," he said. "It is not a boozer; it's a traditional pub that makes everyone feel comfortable. We sell coffee and cake as well as beer, so it is a very friendly place."

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Go with the evidence not with 'gut-feeling'

In the latest article on key EU issues, **Professor Feargal Cochrane** looks at the 'toxic issue' of immigration...



AUTHOR: Professor Feargal Cochrane tackles immigration

WE currently have something approaching a perfect storm in UK politics, relating to inward migration and the forthcoming EU referendum and this looks set to increase in severity over the coming months and certainly until mid-summer.

Immigration has been an undercurrent in British politics for at least two generations, but it has become a toxic issue for the main political parties for several reasons.

Firstly, there is a debate over numbers with a belief in some quarters that there are too many people coming into Britain, causing an unreasonable pressure on jobs, and other aspects of social and health policy.

Secondly, the issue of migrant numbers has been hitched to the debate over EU membership, because of

the numbers who have taken advantage of free movement rules within the EU and migrated from less affluent countries within the European Economic Area.

Thirdly, the global economic crisis that crippled Greece and led to austerity in Ireland, Spain, the UK and elsewhere, sharpened the debate over inward migration and the EU regulations that facilitated it.

Fourthly, the concentration on national security issues since the attacks of September 11th 2001, the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq by the US and its allies, (including the UK); the bomb attacks in London, Madrid –and more recently in Paris and Brussels, has led to a concern with securing the physical borders against attacks from those beyond them.

The result was that migration has been defined in terms of threats rather

than benefits (not only in the UK – but across Western Europe) with little distinction being made between inward EU migration and those from beyond it.

So the issue of migration sits at the centre of political debate within Britain over its future in the European Union and looks set to be a key issue in the referendum vote on 23 June 2016.

However, many people will take an instinctive decision to what will arguably be the most important democratic decision they will participate in during their lifetimes, based on a gut feeling – rather than on a careful weighing of the evidence available to them.

Much of the debate over immigration centres on black and white opinions, rather than on careful assessment of the evidence.

An Ipsos MORI survey conducted after the 2015 General Election, showed that the UK public believed migrants made up 24 per cent of the population in the UK – nearly twice the real figure of just over 12.5 per cent, which included students, who are not permanent residents.

The population of EU migrants is much smaller, with just over 4 per cent of all the population in England and Wales being EU migrants according to 2011 Census.

Numerous academic studies have found that inward migration has not been a drain on the UK economy and in fact the opposite is the case with a net fiscal contribution identified.

Migrants have been found less like-

ly than UK citizens to receive state benefits or tax credits and less likely to live in social housing. When properly fiscally audited, it can be seen that migrants make broader contributions to the UK economy beyond strict monetary transactions.

In short, other countries pay for their skills and education while the UK benefits from it, while migrants are in the main healthy and young, and thus less likely to use the NHS than British nationals.

Finally, as the Migration Observatory in Oxford reported in 2013, two of the top three migrant origin countries to the UK were India and Pakistan, which were not in the EU, while other top sending countries included South Africa and the USA, again, not in the EU and rather complicating the argument that leaving the EU will free the UK from mass migration.

It would be nice if voters based their forthcoming decision in the EU referendum on an informed judgement over who migrants are, how many are permanently resident in the UK and what they contribute to the economic and cultural fabric of the country.

If this happens then we might all come out the other side of the result having finally come to terms with the immigration issue.

Race and religion though (often proxies for opinions on immigration) –well that's another matter.

■ Feargal Cochrane is director of the Conflict Analysis Research Centre at the University of Kent.

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Transformed view of Medway bridges

A striking photograph of the Medway bridges has been selected as one of the best in a photography competition aiming to raise public awareness of infrastructure and will now be featured in an exhibition, writes **Molly Kersey-Law**

A PHOTOGRAPH of the Medway Valley Crossing in Cuxton has been selected as the runner up in a competition.

The photograph was taken by Patrick Higgins – a professional photographer from North Wales, who frequently travels to Medway.

It was entered into the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) photography competition, which aims to 'celebrate the most iconic and important infrastructure schemes'.

Mr Higgins, who has been taking photographs professionally for some ten years, explained: "I have been travelling backwards and forwards to the area since 1996 and have seen the entire crossing develop.

"My wife comes from Kent, her parents and brother have lived there since we were married."

Speaking about his photograph, he said: "In this instance, the sun was low towards the west creating the

magical textures that you see within the photograph.

"I took several compositions but I liked this one the most – it's stark with a brooding sky, yet alive with colour," he added.

"Most structures can pass you by and often you don't get to see the bridges from this low perspective. It's incredible just how the right kind of light can transform your view – concrete will never be the same again."

The nationwide competition accepts entries of original photographs of man-made physical structures such as roads, bridges, tunnels and power stations.

It was launched with the aim of raising public awareness of 'the importance of infrastructure to everyday life and economic growth'.

The judging panel was made up of both industry and photography experts including Ann Bentley – the global chair of property and construction practice Rider Levett Buck-

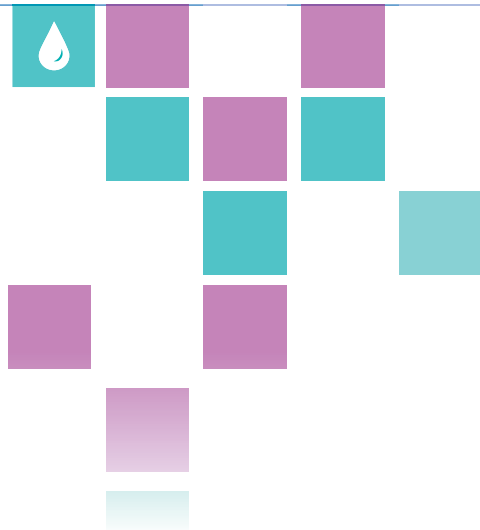
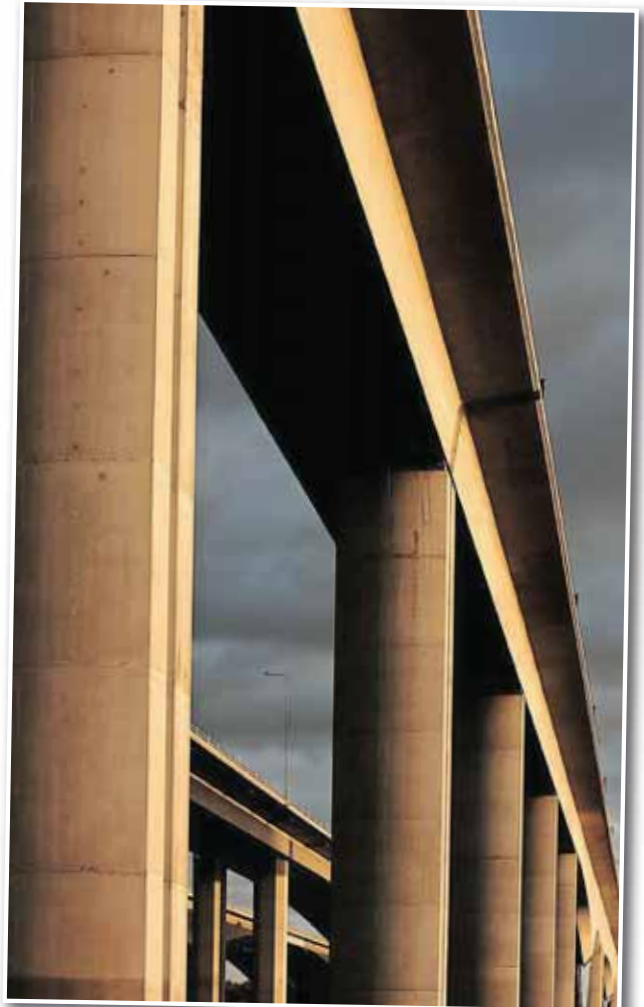
nall and architectural photographer Steve Mayes.

Speaking about Mr Higgins' work, the judges explained that they "loved the arrangement of the structure in this photograph and how Patrick has successfully made such a huge crossing appear elegant, by capturing beautiful warm colours and alluring textures".

Mr Higgins was pipped to the post by Matthew Joseph, who won the competition with his photograph of the Lee Tunnel in London, which is part of the River Thames Tideway Scheme.

Mr Higgins' photograph, along with nine others that made the top ten, will now be showcased at an exhibition at RICS' headquarters at Parliament Square in London.

The exhibition begins on April 18 and lasts for a week, before the images will be auctioned to raise money for property industry charity LandAid.



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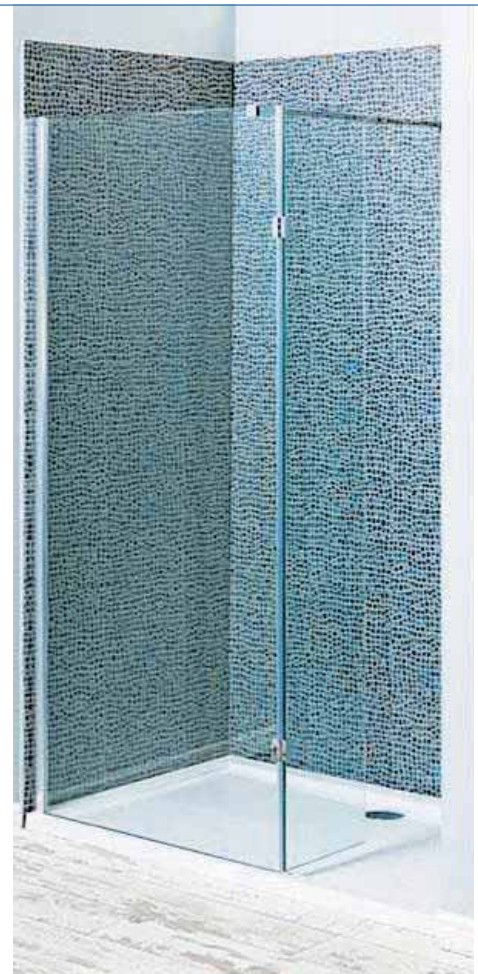
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When waves claimed lives of nine 'incredibly brave' sailors

During a storm in January 1857, cargo ship the Northern Belle ran aground on rocks at Kingsgate and in a bid to rescue its crew three boats were launched but only two sets of sailors returned as **Chris Murphy** reports...

IT was a disaster at sea witnessed by thousands lining the famous cliff-tops around the north Kent coast – a floundering cargo ship had run aground which led to the deaths of nine brave men who dashed to its rescue.

As the sun rose, crowds gathered on the coastal cliffs to watch the crew's eventual salvation.

Just hours earlier the sea had taken the lives of the Victory, a lugger stationed at Margate, which was used as a 'surfboat', a privately owned lifeboat.

A lugger is a class of small boat generally used for fishing and named after its lugsails set on two or more masts and perhaps lug topsails.

Today a memorial stands against the sea wall in the coastal town near to the Turner Contemporary to remember those who died that fateful

night of January 5, 1857.

The campaign to have it installed was down to the staff and regulars of the Northern Belle inn, named after the ship the Victory sped to save.

The Belle was on her way to London from New York. Thanks to the fearless work of the Kent men, none of her crew were lost.

It is a terrifying story of pluck that has seldom been repeated.

On the night of January 5, a terrible storm was brewing in the English Channel that was to eventually turn into a full blown gale with ice and snow to intensify the nightmare.

The Northern Belle made anchor but it slipped in the wind and the ship strayed on to rocks at Kingsgate, between Margate and Broadstairs. She was spotted and by 3am it was clear the men on board were in peril.



RECOGNITION: A medal for one of the heroes from a grateful president

The winds were blowing in the wrong direction so the lifeboats Mary White and Culmer White were moved by horses from Broadstairs to Margate so they could safely launch.

While they were being moved, a trio of luggers called Ocean, Eclipse and Victory went to sea hoping to make some salvage money.

The Ocean plucked five men to safety leaving around 25 still on board.

During the rescue, the Victory was hit by the powerful waves, turned over, and her entire crew was lost.

The lugger crews were hoping to top up their wages over the winter, but the work was extremely hazardous.

Ian Dickie is the lead volunteer at Margate museum, where a display all about the rescue is available to see.

He told us: "Those men were incredible brave. This was not a good time in history to be on a boat.

"It was a hard, hard life in the nineteenth century. I would not want to do their job. Once you are around 500 metres off shore, you haven't got a chance of getting back to shore in the storms these men went out in. If the cold didn't get you, you would drown from eventual exhaustion.

"It really was quite horrendous. "During the rescue of the Belle, the Victory went over and the huge waves



washed the crew overboard. They just never had a chance.

"There were the lifeboats which were run by a charity and the surfboats which were privately owned. It was usually the same crew on both.

"But the men liked to go out in the surfboats because that meant they could go

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THE DEAD REMEMBERED

Those lost on the Victory were: John Smith, 63; William Emptage, 52; John Emptage, 29; Isaac Solly, 46; Abraham

Busbridge, 35; Charles Fuller, 34; George Smith, 29; Henry Paramor, 27; and Frederick Bath, 22.



back afterwards and do salvage.

"The Northern Belle was quite an important ship coming over from America."

After the Victory went down, it was decided those that remained on the Belle crew should stay put for the night, and were lashed to the one re-

maining mast and ride out the storm.

The next day the two lifeboats were sent out to complete the rescue making three trips between them. One man, George Emptage, made all three trips, the final one to talk the captain and pilot off the decks and leave the Belle.

Mr Dickie says a lifeboat used in the rescue was later paraded through the town complete with the Belle's flag which was kept at the Broadstairs harbourmaster's office for some time. It was brought out for special days.

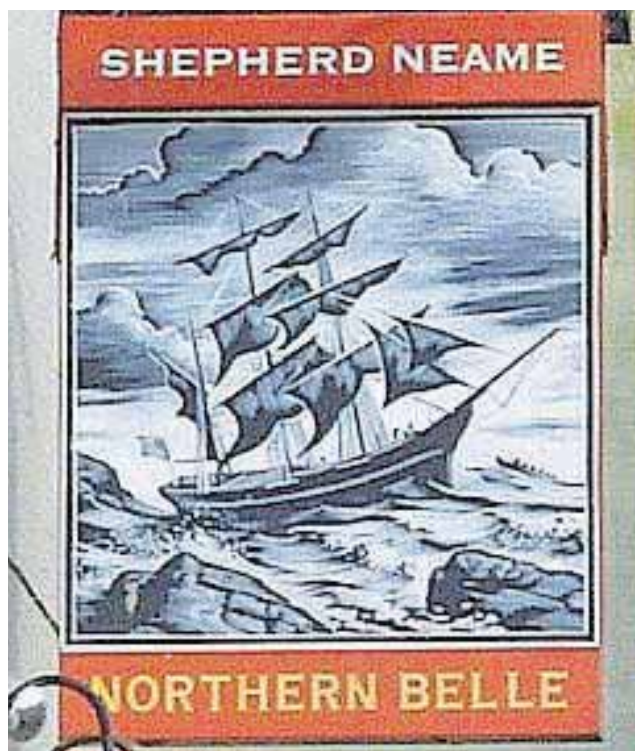
The American president of the time, Franklin Pierce, was so thank-

ful that he ordered 25 specially made silver medals be made for all those involved in the rescue.

Once everyone was back on shore, the Second Mate of the Northern Belle exclaimed that "none but Englishmen would have come off to our rescue on such a night as this!"

REMEMBERED: A pub in Margate is named after the tragedy

PICTURE BY ROBIN WEBSTER



Susan Morris, from Ely, Cambridgeshire, is related to two of the men lost in the sinking.

She said: "My mother was an Emptage and the two Emptages who died were distant relatives; the younger one was my great great grandfather's cousin and the older one was his uncle from a different line.

"We were lucky that other Emptages were in the other rescue boats and lived to tell the tale - they were Charles, George and Edward.

"I believe that all three were the brothers of my great grandfather Alfred Emptage.

"I have never seen my great great grandfather Alfred mentioned in the reports of the disaster but I did discover he was one of those who survived the rescue attempts and was duly presented with his medal along with the others rescuers.

"A cousin of mine later found a reference to the medal saying it is now at the American Numismatic Society in Philadelphia.

"On the back of the medal you can just about make out his name with the use of a magnifying glass because it is now so worn.

"It is possible to read the third line of the inscription which says "to Alfred Emptage". It is possible that it was taken to America when Alfred's oldest son emigrated.

"We found out it was Alfred who had lashed the men of the Belle to their masts so they would remain safe until the storm had subsided.

"The men on the Victory were astonishingly brave in the face of such horrendous conditions.

"We were amazed to find we had such incredible heroes in our family."

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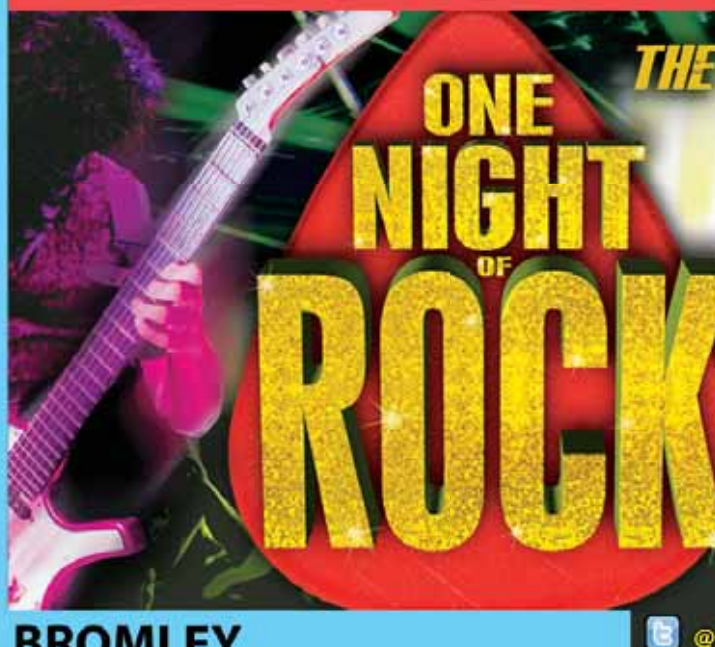


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Remarkable story of soccer ace turned Army officer and hero

‘True heroes’ come in all shapes, sizes and colours as **Chris Murphy** discovers as he finds out about the First World War Army officer from Folkestone whose skill on the football pitch was matched only by his bravery on the battlefield...

It was recently the anniversary of the death of one of Kent's finest First World War heroes who was killed in action on March 25, 1918.

As a black man, Walter Tull broke military rules when he took up the position of an officer in the Army.

University historian Marika Sherwood, from Faversham, who has studied Mr Tull's story, explained: "He was a remarkable man and achieved so much as a time when being a man of his colour would have been a hindrance.

"Why a law was brought in to stop someone black being trained and promoted as an officer, I don't know.

"But by the First World War you had to be of pure European descent to become an officer. And some regiments didn't accept black volunteers. However, not all regiments were so racist and we now have a book about them serving in the war, called Black Tommies."

Walter came from Folkestone, and Ms Sherwood said: "Another fine local soldier to that town, William Cotter also stood out in the military for his bravery. It seems the town once bred true heroes."

Walter Tull was born in Folkestone on April 28, 1888. His father Daniel had arrived from Barbados in 1876 and found work as a carpenter and later married Alice Elizabeth Palmer, from Hougham.

Their young son Walter was educated at North Board School, now Mundella Primary School, in Folkestone.

It was far removed from the life of his grandfather, who had been a slave in Barbados.

Tragically, both Walter's parents died when he was nine-years-old, so he and his brother Edward were moved to live in a Methodist orphanage in Bethnal Green, East London.

It soon became apparent Walter had a great talent for football and in 1909 was signed by Tottenham Hotspur, thus becoming Britain's third black professional footballer after Arthur Wharton of Sheffield and Billy Clarke, who played for Aston Villa.

During some of his matches, the first reports of racism from the terraces emerged. The first came during an away FA Cup match against Bristol City in 1909. The headline in the local paper rang: 'Colour Prejudice Problem at Bristol'.

But the Football Star newspaper reported: "Tull is a model for all white men who play football."

War came as Glasgow Rangers began negotiations with Northampton Town to transfer Tull.

However, the young man abandoned his football career to join the 17th (1st Football) Battalion of the



HERO: Folkestone-born Walter Tull (above) and (left) the story in KoS about William Cotter that prompted historian Marika Sherwood to contact us

Middlesex Regiment. His battalion arrived in France in November 1915.

And it wasn't long before he made his mark.

Ms Sherwood continued: "In the Army, Tull's leadership qualities were quickly recognised and he was promoted to sergeant.

"Despite military regulations forbidding 'any negro or person of colour' being commissioned as an officer, Walter was promoted to lieutenant in 1917 after attending the officer training school at Gailles, Scotland.

"He had fought in the battle of the Somme in 1916 and in Italy in 1917 when he was mentioned in despatches for gallantry and coolness when leading a company of 26 men on a raiding party into enemy territory."

From there, it was back to France, but tragedy was not far away.

Ms Sherwood, a research fellow at

the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, told KoS: "He was returned to France and on 25th March, 1918, was ordered to lead his men in an attack on the German trenches at Favreuil.

"He was hit by a German bullet and must have died instantly. His body was never recovered. He was just 29 years old."

On April 17, 1918, a Lieutenant Pickard wrote to Walter's brother: "Being at present in command (the captain was wounded) - allow me to say how popular he was throughout the Battalion. He was brave and conscientious; he had been recommended for the Military Cross, and had certainly earned it, the Commanding Officer had every confidence in him, and he was liked by the men.

"Now he has paid the supreme sacrifice; the Battalion and Company

North & West

Story of VC hero's courageous last stand goes online

William Cotter received the highest possible honour for his bravery during the First World War. Now his story will live on for future generations thanks to the National Army Museum

By Chris Murphy

chris.murphy@na.gov.uk

Of the greatest men who have ever lived, the greatest of all is the one who has died for his country.

William Cotter, who grew up near Folkestone, was awarded the Victoria Cross - the highest military award for valor in the face of the enemy - for a remarkable act of heroism during the First World War.

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TRAGEDY: There was just a week after his heroism saved the lives of many soldiers in his trench while he was in the front line.

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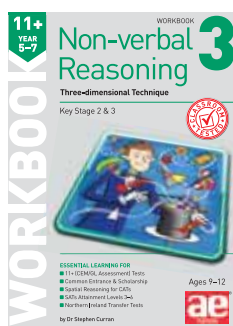
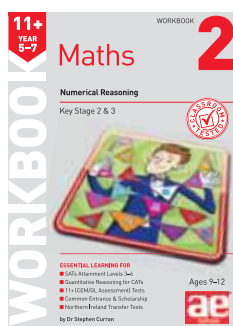
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CHAMPING: It's becoming very popular with many families



Is camping in a church the new glamping?

We have had 'glamping', and now it seems we really enjoy 'champing' in the county too. **Chris Murphy** finds out more...

WHILE 'glamping' is all about being posh under canvas, 'champing' is all about spending the night... inside a church.

Armed with a sleeping bag and some provisions, more and more of us are getting behind this novel money-making idea from the Churches Conservation Trust.

It has become so popular since its launch last year with two churches taking part, that this year there are plans to bring many more parishes on board.

While exactly how many fresh churches there will be to spend the night in, a spokesman admits they had no idea it would catch on so quickly.

Across the south east, there are now 10 churches taking part, but Kent is set to open many more to overnight stayers.

Presently Kent has All Saints' Church in West Stourmouth and The Church of St Mary the Virgin in Fordwich.

The Churches Conservation Trust is the operator of the third largest heritage estate in charitable ownership.

The mostly Grade I and II listed buildings and several Scheduled Ancient Monuments under its umbrella could have vanished forever without its vital work.

They are progressively being as social, tourism, educational or cultural resources, which means they can be kept open and become the heart of a community once again.

And that now includes champing which has just received the Special Judge's Award for Best Accommodation at the 2016 Hudson's Heritage Awards.

The original Saxon building of All Saints was damaged in an earthquake in 1382 and subsequently rebuilt.

St Mary's is a small crooked church that exudes warmth and light and is jam-packed full of ancient examples of exquisite craftsmanship.

Pieces include the 12th-century marble font, jewel-coloured 14th-century stained glass and a large carved

stone shrine, dating from around 1100.

It costs around £55 per person to go champing in Kent, which includes breakfast, and the cash is used for repair and investment to church buildings in more remote locations.

It is £20 for children 15 and under and for groups of eight or more the price reduces to £45 per adult.

The season starts on 1st May, and the trust reckons it will be a busy year for the Kent churches taking part. All the slots can be booked online.

All through 2015, when it was launched as a pilot scheme, champers arrived from around the world.

Crispin Truman, chief executive of trust, said: "Our in-church-camping breaks have already seized the imagination of hundreds of champers around the country and the bookings are flying in for the 2016 season."

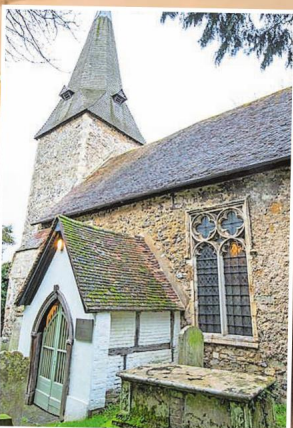
And Peter Aiers, south east trust director, added: "I love historic parish churches and there is no better way to enjoy their beauty and tranquillity than by staying the night. We want to increase the appeal of these public spaces for everyone, so come Champing."

Chatham and Aylesford member of parliament and Minister for Heritage, Tracey Crouch, said: "The Churches Conservation Trust does fantastic work protecting many of our important historic churches and making them accessible to the public."

"The trust's champing scheme has proved a hugely popular and inventive way to encourage people to explore church buildings. As Minister for both Heritage and Tourism, this scheme is truly an encouraging way to ensure the rich history in churches is not lost."

■ For more information, visit champing.co.uk

FORDWICH: You can sleep in the Church of St Mary the Virgin



PICTURES BY Joseph John Casey

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Q & A

TOM THE MUSICAL'S KIT ORTON

The star of the hit musical tells us about playing a legend and the less well known story of Tom Jones' life before he became famous.

TOM JONES IS A TRUE ICON. HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN YOU FOUND OUT YOU WERE PLAYING HIM?

I felt brilliant, then the reality set in that I'm playing someone very current in everyone's minds. I just hoped that people would accept and respect what I did with him. I'm lucky in that I'm playing him at a time before everyone knew who he was.

HOW DOES THAT HELP?

It gives me a lot of artistic licence. I don't do an impression or an impersonation. I could – if there's ever karaoke on, I will sing It's Not Unusual. It's my party trick – but I try to pay a bit more respect to him, as he is still going.

THE SHOW FOCUSES ON LESSER KNOWN TIME IN TOM'S LIFE, DOESN'T IT?

Yes, it's a true story, about the early life of Tom Jones. We all got to know him when he was famous but there is a fascinating story about him trying to become somebody. It's about him breaking down doors trying to get recognised, trying to escape what he thought was trapping him in this small community in Wales. He was working in a paper mill and was just desperate to sing.

It doesn't happen quickly for him. In part of the show, he's close to throwing himself in front of a train because it's not happening. He's not making any money, everyone's about to give up on him and he can't go home a failure. There are dark moments in Tom's life that I was completely unaware of before I joined the show.



WAS THE MUSIC A SURPRISE TOO?

The numbers that we've got in the show aren't all songs that you'd necessarily associate with him. The songs we concentrate on are the songs he used to sing in the pubs and clubs around Wales; Jerry Lee Lewis numbers, Al Jolson numbers.

We've got actors playing Tom's band, The Senators, who happen to be the most amazing musicians as well, so everything you hear in the show is absolutely live. We perform those gigs like you would have heard them if you were there. The amps are on stage with them and set up exactly as they would have been in the late 50s early 60s.

Honestly, if I thought this was a jukebox musical I wouldn't have signed on to it. We don't have a cat called Delilah or a scene where

we buy a new pet leading to What's New, Pussycat? We don't shoehorn songs in for no reason. Our songs are put in place because Tom was a performer. There's no way you can tell his story without having them. We do a lovely medley of hits at the end though, because we want to give people a feel good boom. That's cool, because it's not involved in the story; it's just a bit of fun.

HAS SIR TOM SEEN IT?

He hasn't. His management are aware of the project. Maybe he'll come. I think he'd appreciate the respect we've given him and his story: it makes for great theatre.

In part of the show, he's close to throwing himself in front of a train because it's not happening. He's not making any money, everyone's about to give up on him and he can't go home a failure. There are dark moments in Tom's life that I was completely unaware of before I joined the show.

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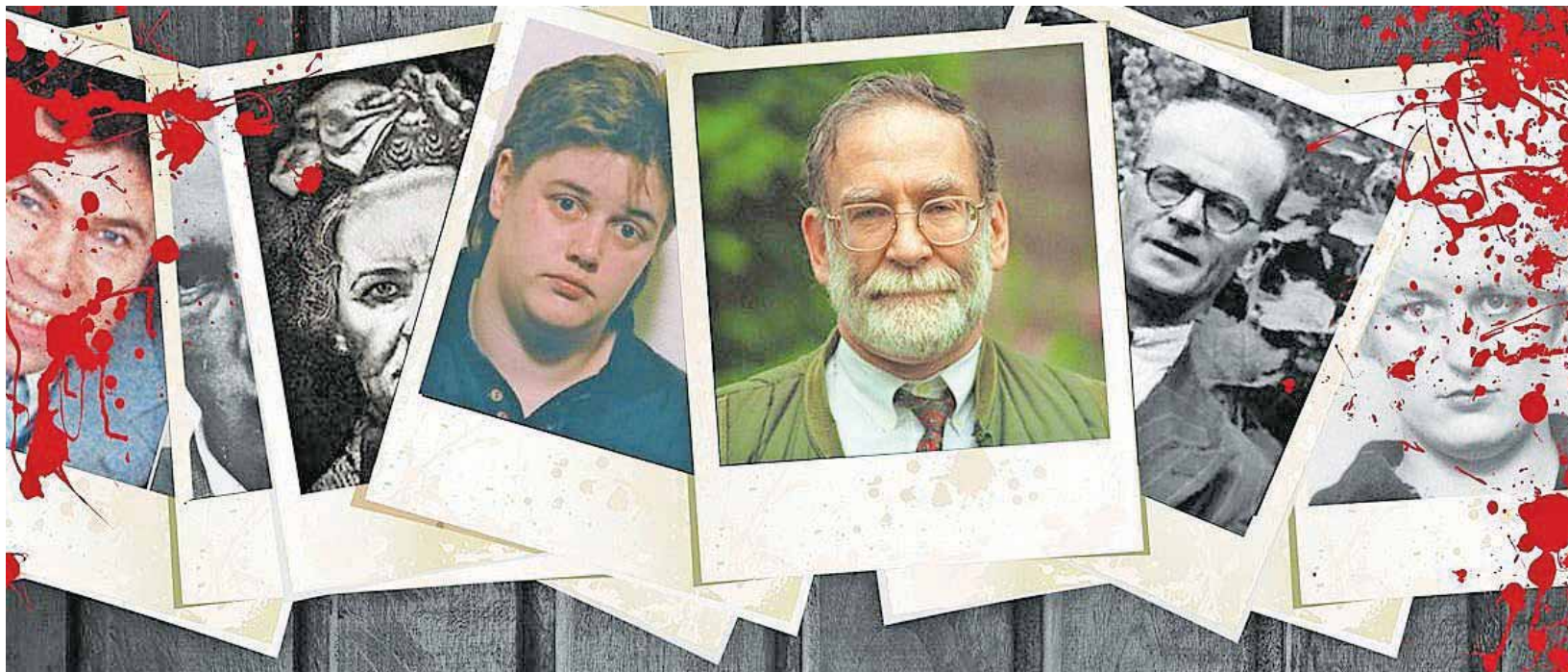
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GALLERY: Gruesome deaths and the cold-blooded killers behind those crimes have a fascination for many people...

Investigating our fascination with serial killers and chilling crimes

A retired murder squad detective will be bringing his new show, highlighting the crimes of 20 of the UK's worst serial killers, to Gravesend. He spoke to **Molly Kersey-Law**...

HEARING the stories of how serial killers went about committing their murders is enough to send shivers down anyone's spine.

And yet, many have something of a morbid fascination with these killers and the crimes that they have committed.

Trevor Marriott, a retired murder squad detective, has been researching serial killers for a number of years, producing books and stage shows exploring their crimes, errors made by law enforcement agencies pursuing them at the time, and how they were eventually caught.

His new show – The UK's Worst Serial Killers – will be performed at Gravesend's Woodville Halls next month.

"The show is a spin-off from my show last year called World's Worst Serial Killers, the content of which was from my book, The Evil Within," Mr Marriott told KoS.

"It was such a successful show, and following the show lots of people were coming up to me and saying why didn't you include this one, or that one?"

"I decided to do one on the UK's worst serial killers. This time I start with serial killers going back to the Victorian period and then bring it back up to date."

While the show is certainly not for the faint-hearted, Mr Marriott explained that it won't be as graphic as his previous one.

kentnews.co.uk kent-life.co.uk

"There's no blood and gore," he said.

"A lot of the serial killers featured in World's Worst Serial Killers are not from this country and it's far easier to get access to crime scene photos in countries outside of the UK. It's difficult to get hold of crime scene photos in this country, the police tend to keep them very much to themselves and don't make them available to the press, whereas in countries like the US they are far easier to get access to."

The audio-visual show features photographs of the killers and their victims.

Mr Marriott added: "It's not just me standing up there talking, there's about 200 images and video clips that are shown."

"For those people who watch TV documentaries you get a 60 minute documentary on one person alone. In this particular show I can give the tales of 20 serial killers – their crimes, how they conducted them and how they were caught."

"I have tried to break it up in relation to the type of murders they carried out and what they did to their victims. I have to vary the content so it doesn't get repetitive and choose crimes that people can get interested in."

And he has noticed an interesting trend in the audiences that come to see his shows.

"I have to say that perhaps 80 per cent of my audience, with the previous show and this one so far, all tend to have been made up of women," he said.

"The age range tends to be right across the board, but there's a greater leaning towards younger people. I would put that down to the fact that I get a lot of students coming to the shows, who are studying subjects like criminology and psychology."

"A lot of the students on those courses tend to be females rather than males, so that helps to swell the female numbers."

Serial killers known to have had links to the county include Colin Ireland, who was born in Dartford and murdered a number of homosexual men and Patrick Mackay, who confessed to killing 11 people – with elderly women and a priest among his victims – in Kent and London.

But Mr Marriott remained tight-lipped on whether either of them would be discussed in the show.

"They could be," he said.

"Patrick Mackay is an interesting one. When you look at the crimes of these serial killers, there's some who don't care who they kill or where they kill or why. I think Mackay was one of those."

"I tend not to tell people who is in it at this stage, because it often spoils it if people know who they are seeing. There are people in this show that people who follow serial killers and their crimes are not going to be too familiar with."

Mr Marriott spent some 25 years in the police force, and conducted a cold case investigation into the 1888 Jack the Ripper murders in 2002.

"With reference to the Ripper investigation my police experience was invaluable," he said.

"I could look at things in a totally different light to an author or member of the public."

He published books Jack the Ripper – A 21st Century Investigation and Jack the Ripper – The Secret Police Files, before turning his attention to researching serial killers and releasing The Evil Within – The World's Worst Serial Killers, in 2014.

But what of criticism that he is making a profit out of people's pain and suffering?

"What I am presenting to the public is reality. It's what happened. We can't change that," he said.

"When I took my World's Worst Serial Killers show to a theatre in Yorkshire – of course with the Yorkshire Ripper in particular – a reporter said 'do you think it's right you're making money out of this type of thing?'"

I said 'the stories are there to be told'.

"The Yorkshire Ripper goes back more than 30 years and a lot of people who come to the show

weren't even born then, therefore what I am describing, they might not even be aware of."

"How far do you go back and say – will relatives not be too pleased if you're talking about their loved ones being killed?"

"Jack the Ripper was 127 years ago, are we to say we can't talk about Jack the Ripper because there may be family members of the victims who are still alive?"

The UK's Worst Serial Killers will be performed at the Woodville Halls on April 21.

■ **For more information visit**
www.trevormarriott.co.uk.

TALK: Retired murder squad detective Trevor Marriott



Is your wardrobe lacking the vibrancy of spring? Or are your go-to summer outfits looking more

drab than fab? Now's the perfect time to shake up your style ready for the warmer months, so we've

taken a sneak peek at the hottest trends hitting stores at intu Lakeside this season...



*Marks & Spencer
Striped Jumper £35*



*Miss Selfridge
Dress £75*

*Linea at House of Fraser
Striped Jacket £99*



*TopShop
Striped Top £18*

*New Look
Tunic £27*



*River Island
Dress £55*



Nauticaluxe

A fashion classic has been revamped this season for both menswear and womenswear as nautical style gets turned up a notch to become Nauticaluxe. This trend is all about big, bold

blues, reds and whites - think stripes paired with standout red heels and a bit of glitz. Head to Topshop where this trend is BIG – and don't forget the nautical inspired accessories to complete the look.

Boho Bandit

Reminisce about the summer of '69 with this vintage inspired trend hot off the catwalks. From patterned maxi dresses to big floppy hats, this style is inspired

by all things 60s and 70s and is perfect for warm summer days spent round the BBQ. Want the look? You'll find everything you need to embrace this style at River Island.



*DKNY at House of Fraser
Monochrome scarf £39*

*Red Herring at Debenhams
Bag £20*

Monochrome

Monochrome is a surprise hit this season and it's been spotted on catwalks from New York to Paris. With its sharp silhouettes and geometric patterns, this style is the perfect option

if you're looking to make a statement. The trend has even been appearing on swimwear, perfect for lounging around the pool. Check out Victoria Secret's range of swimwear and discover a monochrome style which gets heads turning.



*Dorothy Perkins
Suede Dress £90*

*DKNY at House of Fraser
Saffiano Light Pink Satchel
£215*

Pink Soda

Who doesn't love a splash of colour? With this feminine trend you'll stand out from the crowd and have a bit of fun whilst you're doing it! Use a kaleidoscope of pastels and

don't be afraid to team baby pinks with baby blues. Don't forget a pair of statement white jeans and court shoes to ensure your look 'pops'. Dorothy Perkins is the place to go to embrace this trend.



*Dorothy Perkins
Red Pinafore Dress £35*

*Frost French at Debenhams
Sunglasses £16*

Imperial Red

Red is one of the hottest shades this summer so make sure your wardrobe is crammed with crimson if you want to embrace this trend. From cami tops and dresses to sandals

and handbags, red will reign supreme throughout the season. And if your makeup bag could do with a splash of red, check out MAC's amazing range of statement lipsticks to seal the deal.

With a bigger fashion selection than ever before, including All Saints, Zara, Oasis and House of Fraser, intu Lakeside is the perfect destination to revamp your wardrobe. Or, get personal with intu Lakeside's very own

personal stylist, Carlene Noel, who offers FREE sessions at the centre. So whether you're jetting off on a holiday, partying the day away at a festival or getting sun-kissed on the beach, ensure your style is on trend at intu Lakeside.



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Holywell Park is a large country house built approximately 300 years ago and is set in its own grounds situated in the Hamlet of Hodsoll Street. Family run since 1986, our aim is to provide a friendly, caring environment for the elderly. The beautiful house is surrounded by lovely gardens. There is even a quaint country put outside our gates!

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Meet the real superheroes that keep people safe on our streets

They have been described as the 'backbones of our communities, playing a vital role in keeping us safe and helping others' by none other than the county's police and crime commissioner Ann Barnes. **Luke May** finds out about the work of Kent's many street pastors by talking to one of the volunteers who patrols the streets of Gravesend...

WALKING through the streets of Gravesend on a night out might conjure up all sorts of sights, but in recent years one staple of every weekend has been the teams of patrolling street pastors looking out for those in need.

Teams of street pastors work across Kent, with groups in Tunbridge Wells, Whitstable, Sittingbourne, Sheppey and more.

With teams of four ranging from 23-year-olds to 80-year-olds, the Gravesend street pastors aim to keep people safe on nights out in Gravesend.

Running since 2009, there are nearly 50 volunteers who walk the streets of the town centre on Friday and Saturday nights.

Priscilla McBean has been with the pastors since it started, and told KoS what the team do on an average night out.

"Our regular hours are from 10pm to 2am, but it depends on what we find, on the last Saturday of the month (payday) we put out two teams, as one goes in for refreshments at around midnight, the other goes out and stays out until around 4am.

"We like to think the town is covered completely.

"People being drunk is usually the biggest thing we encounter on a night out.

"I often say we are there to listen, to help and to care.

"We sit with people who might have had a bit too much to drink, get them sober enough so they can get a cab home.

"We see girls that start off the night with wonderful shoes that take them off toward the end.



"Instead of letting them walk around barefoot on the streets we give them flip-flops.

"We tend to focus on girls, if we see them outside a train station on their own we'll go over and talk to them so they're not alone.

"They say they're just waiting for somebody but we think they're safer with someone there, so we'll talk to them about their night and where they've been.

"On every patrol we carry lollipops and we hand them out, it tends to defuse any tense situations, but we often find that our presence can help.

"I would say the arguments we see aren't any more than what I would call domestics, people in the same group arguing, we don't really get any sort of gang violence."

Having joined the pastors when they were set up in 2009, the 74-year-old explained why she was still willing to head out on patrol.

She said: "We have prayer pastors who stay at base, radioing us if there is anything going on and offering us refreshments when we come in for breaks.

"I much prefer being out on the streets, what I didn't expect was for it to be so much fun.

"We're past the jokes with people calling us street pasties, everyone who is out know who we are and talk to us when they need to.

"People often get concerned for our welfare; they ask who we are and why we aren't at home in bed.

"But out on patrol, we can have just as much fun as the people who are out celebrating."

"The big attraction to being a street pastor for me was that we are a Christian organisation, but we cannot be evangelical.

"We can't just approach people and start talking about our religion.

"Some people like to talk to us about it and ask us questions, we get couples that say they would like to get married in a church but have never been to one.

"We're not trying to convert people, we're just trying to help them on

North & West



their night out."

Last year the organisation helped 272 people in difficulty.

Following its success, the police and crime commissioner's office awarded the pastors' a £1,516 grant.

The volunteer explained why receiving donations was so important to the pastor's existence.

She said: "Anyone who signs up has to find £300, this all goes towards the costs of the uniform and the administration of the group.

All but one of our team are unpaid volunteers, the only person who is paid is in charge of our admin.

"It is a lot of money but it shows the commitment of those who want to join, they've got their uniform and they're ready.

"You have to train to become a street pastor, it takes 12 sessions on Saturdays, so anyone who signs up has to be willing to give up that many Saturdays.

"During the training courses we cover things like first aid and communicating with people."

Other courses taken by the pastors include knowing your area and mental health training, as well as information on drug and alcohol awareness.

And Mrs McBean who describes herself as a "Gravesender", said the group often works alongside the police.

"The police have said we're helpful, they could be looking after people but once we arrive they know we can take over and they can continue their patrols.

"It's a two way relationship, they ask us to keep an eye out for things sometimes and we have to call them sometimes

"We try and clean up glass bottles as we go, it's not just about the environment, and they do have the potential to be used as weapons."

Police and crime commissioner Ann Barnes praised the work of the street pastors.

She said: "These people are the backbones of our communities, playing a vital role in keeping us safe and helping others.

"I know this grant will make a real difference to them.

"The pastors made a very compelling bid for the money and I'm delighted to be able to help them continue with their vital work.

Money from the grant is expected to go towards setting up a new team to send out on patrols in Gravesend.

The service is always looking for new recruits either as prayer or street pastors.

To find out more about the charity, contact gravesham@street-pastors.co.uk.

Week ending April 3, 2016 39

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60s Party Break

4-Star Hinckley Island Hotel,
Leicestershire

Friday, 17 June, 2016 - Quote HK6-KOS

Join us for a private party break featuring 60s bands The Fortunes and The Ivy League at the 4-star Hinckley Island Hotel nestled in the heart of Leicestershire near Nuneaton and Market Bosworth. Relax in the hotel's indoor pool and fitness suite, the Triumph Sports bar and Piazza Lounge Bar, or venture out to nearby attractions, before dinner and a fun-packed evening both nights.

INCLUDED: Entertainment • 2 dinners and 2 breakfasts
• Free use of leisure facilities • 2 nights sharing an en-suite bedroom with TV, tea/coffee tray and free wifi
• Free Parking



60s Party Break

Thatcher's Hotel,
Guildford, Surrey

Friday 28 Oct, 2016 - Quote: TG10-KOS

Enjoy live entertainment from a 60s tribute act both nights at the Thatcher's Hotel in the heart of the Surrey countryside just a short drive from Guildford. There are plenty of local attractions to explore during the day including Guildford Cathedral, The Hogs Back Brewery and Polesden Lacey. Further afield, Portsmouth with its Gunwharf Quays outlet shopping village and Spinnaker Tower is about an hour's drive away.

INCLUDED: Entertainment • 2 dinners and 2 breakfasts
• 2 nights sharing an en-suite bedroom with TV, tea/coffee tray and free wifi • Free Parking



Mamma Mia & Super 70s Party

Friday, 8 July, 2016

Quote: SS7-KOS

Join us at Pontins Pakefield, on the Suffolk coast, for a Super Summer Private Party - for over 40s only. Our fun-packed weekend features 70s chart toppers Showaddywaddy, a screening of Mamma Mia the movie plus Abba and Rod Stewart tributes. Entertainment is virtually non-stop from Friday to Sunday evening and you'll also enjoy free drinks every night.

INCLUDED: 3 Free drinks per person per night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers • Entertainment • 3 nights en-suite chalet accommodation - club upgrade available • 3 dinners & 3 breakfasts • Free Parking



Ultimate 60s Christmas Party

Pontins Pakefield, Suffolk

Friday, 18 November, 2016

Quote: XP11-KOS

Join us on the Suffolk coast for a Fab Private Party - for over 40s only - to get you in the mood for Christmas. Enjoy plenty of festive fun, free drinks every night and non-stop entertainment from Friday to Sunday evening. This year's line-up includes: The Searchers, Union Gap, The New Honeycombs, The Cufflinks plus a tribute to Dusty Springfield.

INCLUDED: 3 Free drinks per person per night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers • Entertainment • 3 nights en-suite chalet accommodation - club upgrade available • 3 dinners & 3 breakfasts • Free Parking



60s Party Breaks

Stoke Rochford Hall,
Lincolnshire

14 Oct, 4 & 18 Nov, 2016 - Quote SR-KOS

Join us for a 60s-themed private party break at Stoke Rochford Hall in the heart of rural Lincolnshire near Grantham. This historic Victorian mansion is set in 28 acres of landscaped parkland with accommodation in the Stable Courtyard and Woodland Lodge annexe and entertainment in The Venue - for over 40s only, all located in the grounds. Enjoy a 60s tribute act both nights and access to the leisure club's gym, heated pool, sauna and steam room.

INCLUDED: Entertainment • 2 dinners & 2 breakfasts
• Free use of leisure facilities • 2 nights sharing an en-suite bedroom with TV & tea/coffee tray • Free Parking



Super 60s Premium Christmas Party

Christmas Party at Warner Norton Grange, Isle of Wight

Friday 25 Nov, 2016 - Quote: NG11-KOS

Great Entertainment, a fab festive atmosphere, free drinks, good food, free car ferry and a super location make Warner's Norton Grange resort, on the Isle of Wight, our most popular over 40s Christmas Party venue. We've booked the whole resort again for an exclusive celebration with a super entertainment line-up featuring 60s band Union Gap, Roy Carter of Heatwave, a Rod Stewart tribute and more.

INCLUDED: Free drinks from 6pm to midnight every night - house beers and spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks and mixers • Entertainment • 3 nights standard en-suite chalet - upgrades available • 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners • Return car ferry & Free Parking

Private Events - You cannot book these self-drive breaks direct with the hotels/resorts



EMOTIONAL: Ireland's Call will be performed at the Central Theatre, Chatham

Show set against backdrop of major historical events

Musical is 'full of emotional highs and lows' and will be performed in Chatham

A NEW musical adaptation of the critically-acclaimed show Essence of Ireland will be performed in Chatham during its tour of the UK.

Ireland's Call will be performed at the Central Theatre later this month.

Inspired by true events and spanning three decades, the musical tells the story of one man's love for his Irish homeland.

It follows the adventures of strong-headed Sean Dempsey who, at the end of the Second World War, decides to head to New York in search of a better life – leaving Ireland and his childhood sweetheart Cora behind.

Can Sean and Cora's love survive the Atlantic divide, and will he be able to resist Ireland's call as he embarks on his travels?

The musical was written and produced by Ross Mills, Trevor Payne and Ged Graham.

It features a number of both original and well-known songs such as Galway Girl, Isle of Hope Isle Of Tears, I Loved Her First, Tell Me Ma, Irish Rover and the title song - Ireland's Call.

Creative director Ged Graham explained: "We are really looking forward to bringing the show to stages across the world, starting with some of the UK's most prestigious venues in 2016, a year set to be a huge celebration of Irish culture to commemorate the centenary of the Easter Rising."

Also known as the Easter Rebellion, this saw members of the Irish Volunteers and the Citizen's Army occupy buildings in Dublin and proclaim a republic on Easter Monday in 1916.

It was quashed by the British Army some six days later.

Mr Graham added: "Everyone has been separated from loved ones and their homes at some point in their lives, so this is a story that people can really engage with and relate to, myself included."

"The audience is drawn in to the story and swept on a journey that is both heartbreaking and heartwarming."

"It is set against a backdrop of key historical events including America's introduction to rock and roll, the rebuilding of London post World War two and John F Kennedy's historic presidential visit to Ireland in 1963," he explained.

"It's a story full of emotional highs and lows."

The show features a number of dancers from the county's Turner Academy of Irish Dance and Leanne

Kyte, who is from Dartford.

Ms Kyte began her training at the Liz Burville Performing Arts Centre in Bexley at the age of three, and gained a place at the Young Americans College of Performing Arts in California when she was 18.

Since her return to the UK she worked with various touring production companies and has previously starred in stage shows including Aladdin, Dick Whittington and My Fair Lady.

Ireland's Call will be performed on April 23 at 7.30pm.

Tickets to the show range from £22.50 to £24.50.

For further information about the performance or to book tickets you can visit www.tickets.medway.gov.uk.

Alternatively you can call the box office on 01634 338338 or email boxoffice@medway.gov.uk.

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Women Seeking

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SINGLE late 60s female, n/s, GSOH, likes going out and being active, not fun on my own, seeking single male, 60-70, n/s, with GSOH, to share each others interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421433

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+. Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3002 Box No: 419673

MATURE lady early 80s, family oriented, likes dancing, holidays especially cruising, WLTW similar aged gentleman with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421429

JANE young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. Tel: No: 0906 515 3010 Box: 409715

DANCE partner, 70-75, sought by lady in Tunbridge Wells area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421071

LUCY first time advertiser, 32yrs, tall slim blonde airline worker, seeks discreet gent, any status for casual fling. Looks/age unimportant. Tel: 0906 515 3026 Box: 420237

GENUINE single female 49, seeking good-natured, intelligent, polite, single male for friendship/relationship. Text only to Mailbox: 4198603

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel: 0906 515 3018 Box: 413399

KIND, caring lady of African origin, living in UK for past 20 years, looking for a gentleman who is kind and caring, must have a GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421041

KAREN, 42yrs, attractive and broadminded, seeks no strings fun with chap any age, must be discreet. Tel: 0906 515 3038 Box: 407953

ANGELA, 53, African origin, looking for a kind, genuine, caring gentleman, 60 years +. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421039

ABIGAIL, 33yrs slim sophisticated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with a discreet experienced man married or single. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3014 Box 421339

SINGLE slim female, 68, n/s, GSOH, likes cooking, walking etc, seeks male, single, slim 65-70, n/s, with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420091

EMILY, mature well educated lady, blonde and smart and broadminded seeks gent any age for no strings fun. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3022 Box: 421375

SLIM female GSOH, 53. Likes walking, pub lunches, days out, looking for soul mate, smart appearance, similar interests N/S GSOH, easy going. Text only to Mailbox no: 4762600

PAMELA, 33yrs, has a naughty side which she wants to share with similar minded discreet gent. You should be 30+ and have a wicked SOH. Box: 4031004 Text only

KIND lady, 50s, been broken hearted, seeks kind, genuine man for caring relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419889

JESS, London based but can travel and accommodate, 39yrs, recently single and looking for no strings fun, may lead to more but not yet. Gents 40+ please, open minded, discreet and fun. Box: 4107546 Text only

PAT, slim, single, 68, non-smoker, GSOH, likes going for walks etc, seeks male, slim, single, 66-70, non-smoker, clean-shaven, GSOH, with similar interests, Canterbury area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419081

MARION, early 70s, young at heart, GSOH, active, likes walking, gardening, meals out, travel, theatre and animals, looking for male friendship to share interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419657

CHANTELLE, 5ft3 light brown/blonde hair, blue eyes, like nights in/out, walks, animals, romance seeks honest guy. Littlehampton. Text only to Mailbox no: 4923883

MARIE, very lonely middle-aged woman, looking for a kind hearted older man, late 70s/early 80s for friendship/companionship. Tel: 0906 515 7112 Box: 418955

RACHEL late 40s, blonde, blue eyes and very voluptuous. Looking for a kind, caring honest man. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418741

ESSEX lady, mid 60's, adaptable, seeking nice male, likes most things. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418537

AMANDA, 36, tall, slim, busty blonde seeks man, any age, any area, for discreet daytime fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418117

HELEN, widow 58, medium build, 5ft 4ins, blonde, GSOH, likes a chat, days out, looking to start again with someone of similar age. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376243

FEMALE, 59, GSOH, many interests, seeks caring male for fun friendship maybe more, genuine calls only. Text only to Mailbox No: 4819793

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GORGEOUS flower, Ashford Kent, 51, larger lady, large personality, easy going, seeks male who likes dogs, animals for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417435

FEMALE easy going, kind, loving, genuine, romantic, car boots, gardening, seeking male with GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417603

PAT, 68, young at heart, slim, proud 4' 11" GSOH, N/S, likes walking etc Whistable area, seeks similar slim easy going male 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419081

SUSIE fit, friendly, looking for someone to love and look after me, preferably older, N/S male with own car. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392537

HAPPY young looking lady, 62, likes socialising, conversation, seeking nice man to share good times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407383

NICE female looking for decent genuine male for friendship to start out with. Text only to Mailbox no: 4710874

KATIE, 5ft 5, slim dark hair, very attractive female, likes most things in life and a good laugh, looking for a similar male. Text only to Mailbox no: 4722127

BLONDE female, 5ft 1ins, size 12, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, walks, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409025

JAN 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349

ATTRACTIVE lady early 50's, petite, Scandinavian blonde professional, WLTW professional, caring gent, 50-60's for attention and future together. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416569

RACHEL attractive, blue eyes, blonde, voluptuous, seeking kind, honest, generous kind male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418403

JAN 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349

SUE young at heart, good looking, enjoy life, socialising, beach walks, gardening, theatre, seeking male, 55-65 to share life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416171

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MALE, 55 looking for mature lady for outings and adult fun, easy going, GSOH, nice looking and a bit shy. Text only Mailbox: 4922399

LEON, single Dad, recently widowed, 55yrs, very kind and generous would love to meet a kind lady, looks not important but must love children. Box: 4068577. Text only

YOUNG 50s male looking for discreet daytime kisses and cuddles with nice female. Kent and Sussex. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421601

FEMININE sensual female, slim-medium build wanted by slim, kind male for daytime meetings, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414809

WIDOWER 67, N/S, likes real ale, country music, gardening, DIY, seeks N/S female for lots of TLC. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381143

CHRIS widower, likes DIY, gardening, nights out, rock and roll, N/S, looking for LTR with female. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410191

MALE, 6ft, slim, 67, divorced, retired, likes social drinks, meals out, nights in and all other, WLTW lady with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421351

MATURE cross dressing guy, seeking lady willing to apply a full make over and give a manicure and pedicure. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421341

MALE 50, GSOH, looking for soul mate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 387485

ALISON 39, petite with long brown hair, hazel eyes, very loving, seeking similar male for an uncomplicated relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416517

ALISON 30, pretty, slim with long brown hair, fit and active seeks fit older male for energetic relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416497

DEBORAH 41, intelligent brunette, lovely brown eyes, discreet, many interests, seeks similar male to share fun and good conversation. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416515

ATTRACTIVE black, athletic lady, varied interests, seeks similar white, old fashioned, genuine male for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416215

MAY sexy black African female, 38, hardworking, seeks generous friendly male for mutual rewarding friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416211

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

CLINT, 37, kind, caring, honest and WLTW someone of any age who is similar and looking for a relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419951

HEALTHY 61yr old male, N/S, medium build, likes France, cooking, gardening, seeks female, 50-60 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 286360

ATTRACTIVE white gent, 48, 56ft, romantic, easy going, GSOH, seeking young lady, 60-75 for quality discreet fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410025

BROWN eyed white mature, handsome male, seeking black female, 18-50 for discreet no strings adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410377

SIX foot guy, mature, looking for someone special to spend some quality time with. Please leave me a message I would love to hear from you! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420163

NEVILLE 5ft 6ins, Caribbean, likes wine, nights in, seeks female to spend the rest of his life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 333911

DAVE 46, seeks active female for walking, climbing and outdoor fun. Days out and evenings in. Friendly and GSOH. Text only to Mailbox no: 5338933

PROFESSIONAL gentleman, just retired, own house, loves holidays, WLTW a lady for meals out, and to enjoy each others company. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419751

SIX foot guy, mature, looking for someone special to spend some quality time with. Please leave me a message I would love to hear from you! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420163

HUBERT, lives in Rochester, single, lonely, looking for someone to get together with and make something happen and enjoy the rest of life with! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420049

ROCKABALLY guy, seeks rock music, 25-50 who likes 50's rock music and bands. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 284750

MALE, 60, medium build, gosh, seeks attractive female, under 50, for no strings, discreet, daytime fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420621

MATTHEW, five foot eleven, looking for a mature lady for discreet friendship and a few laughs. Dartford area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419469

PROFESSIONAL gentleman, just retired, own house, likes holidays, reading, cinema, WLTW similar professional lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420767

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GARETH handsome 40's pilot, strong tall build, seeks daytime discreet passion with lady 30-65. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414421

MALE 56, likes good conversation, seeks older lady for discreet friendly fun, 50 plus. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419201

YOUNG 60yr old male, knows how to treat a lady, seeking special lady to spoil for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417909

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MICK 50, seeks attractive female for nice times out, genuine calls only. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417691

PAUL 49 5ft 8ins likes eating/nights in/out seeks loving female for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404013

PAUL GSOH, 5ft 8ins, medium build, seeking Miss Right for LTR to put the spark back into life. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 391970

PROFESSIONAL, romantic male, 44, likes meals out, cinema, music, holidays, seeks female, 30-55 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 250195

PAUL 48, 5ft 8ins, GSOH, likes music, cinema, seeks female for fun, friendship and LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 371985

JOHN, 47, six foot two, well-built, handsome, non-smoker, intelligent and funny, doesn't take himself too seriously, easy to get along with, seeks attractive female, any age, for discreet, adventurous, any time fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419461



MALE 51, 5ft 8ins, N/S, GSOH, easygoing, seeks slim female, 18-45 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338269

WHITE Knight 59 5'10 tall, OHAC, in shining armour, looking for Damsel in Distress of similar age to share fun & laughter. Text only to Mailbox no: 5073004

50YR old divorced white male, passionate, strong, seeking caring lady for romantic, loving relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418641

Gay Seeking

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

ALAN, 68, straight acting gay man, kind, caring with GSOH, likes sport, art and going on holidays, looking for another gay man. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421529

ROBBIE, 54, reasonably fit, bi-curious, I'm very inexperienced and would like to meet a CD or TV preferably but not essential for a bit of fun. Kent area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421357

MATURE guy, loves CD, seeks similar friend for mutual fun, can accommodate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421093

MALE likes CD, seeking similar male for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418513

BI guy heavy build, WLTW assertive adventurous white or Indian guy for mutual pleasure. Text only to Mailbox no: 4321273

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Music of Rory Gallagher due to be revived by band Sinnerboy

By Molly Kersey-Law

molly.kersley-law@archant.co.uk

BAND Sinnerboy will be bringing the music of iconic guitarist Rory Gallagher to Chislehurst next week.

Irish multi-instrumentalist Mr Gallagher had a large impact on blues and rock music before he died in 1995 at the age of 47.

Barry Barnes formed band Sinnerboy in 2001 'with the sole intention of keeping Rory's memory and music alive'.

Mr Barnes, who is the lead guitarist and singer in the band, explained: "I was just so, so upset. He was far too young to have been taken from us."

"As the months went on, I had it in my mind that something should be done to commemorate Rory's death, and to celebrate the huge contribution he made to the rock and blues scene, influencing so many great players over the years."

He organised a gig at what was The Ponomia in Manchester, and said that it was a big success.

"The place was rammed, I couldn't believe it, there were people stood at the windows listening



ICONIC: The hits of Rory Gallagher (pictured) will be performed by band Sinnerboy

because they couldn't get in," he explained.

"You didn't have the social media sharing that you do these days, and I had no idea that so many fans remembered Rory and his music, and felt the same way I did. It was so moving."

"Then the next day, I woke up late to a message on my answer machine from Donal Gallagher, Rory's brother, asking me to ring

him back. He was lovely, and said how grateful he was that Rory's music was living on in this way."

"I was very touched by his phone call, and he continues to be very supportive of what we do."

Sinnerboy is made up of Mr Barnes, Dave Smiley on bass guitar and Steve Richardson, who is from nearby Orpington, on drums.

The band will be performing at the Beaverwood Club on Thursday (April 7).

The doors will be opening at 7.30pm and the music starts at 8.15pm.

Tickets are £10 if bought in advance or £12 on the door.

For further information about the band and the upcoming performance you can visit www.sinnerboy.co.uk.

Mark Steel's stage show

MARK Steel will be bringing his show - Who Do You Think I Am? - to the Theatre Royal Margate on April 9.

It will be starting at 7.30pm. Visit www.theatreroyalmargate.com.



Best-selling author event

BEST-SELLING children's author Cathy Cassidy will be signing copies of her book, the Broken Heart Club, at Bluewater Shopping Centre on April 23.

She will be at Waterstones bookshop in the shopping centre's West Village at 11am.

The event is free of charge.

Musical duo in Dartford

MUSICAL duo Hannah Sanders and Ben Savage will be performing at the Dartford Folk Club on April 26.

For further details or to pre-book tickets you can visit www.hannahbenmusic.com.



Tale of love and treachery

ELLEN Kent's Tosca will be performed on stage in Folkestone in May.

Set against the backdrop of Rome, the production tells a story of love and treachery.

It will be performed at the Leas Cliff Hall on May 8 at 7.30pm.

Visit www.atgtickets.com/folkestone to book.

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Peter Howarth will perform

THE Hollies' frontman Peter Howarth will be performing at the Marlowe Studio, Canterbury, on June 7.

Michael Armstrong will be guest-starring.
Call 01227 787787 to book.



West Side Story on stage

THE Kent Musical Theatre Society will be bringing their production of West Side Story to the Hazlitt Theatre, Maidstone.

It will run from August 30 to September 3, with performances at 2.30pm and 7.30pm.

Tickets are £15 and can be booked from www.parkwoodtheatres.co.uk.

Flare Path begins its run

TERENCE Rattigan's critically-acclaimed Flare Path will be at the Orchard Theatre, Dartford, from Tuesday (April 5) to Saturday (April 9).

For further details, or to book, call 01322 220000.



Jimmy Carr in Gravesend

COMEDIAN Jimmy Carr will be bringing his stand up show, Work in Progress, to the Woodville Halls, Gravesend.

He will be taking to the stage on Monday (April 4) at 8pm.

Tickets range from £15 to £21.

For further details, visit www.woodville.co.uk.

Hip hop dance festival is breaking convention

By Molly Kersey-Law

molly.kersey-law@archant.co.uk

A FESTIVAL of hip hop dance will be making its way to Canterbury during its UK tour.

Breakin' Convention will be on stage at the Gulbenkian in May – one of eight venues it will be performed at.

The festival, which is currently in its 13th year, was founded by hip hop dancer Jonzi D and annually takes place at London performing arts venue Sadler's Wells Theatre.

A number of acts from around the world will be performing including Antoinette Gomis, from France, Iron Skulls, from Spain, and The Ruggeds, from the Netherlands.

Ms Gomis was a founding member of the all-female Zamounda Crew from Paris.

She will be performing Images, a dance solo which was inspired by Waring Cuney, an African American poet, whose poem of the same name was set to music and sung by Nina Simone.

Award-winning Iron Skulls will



perform Sinesthesia, which sees the dancers take on the roles of post-apocalyptic survivors.

The group are from Barcelona and combine hip hop, contemporary dance and acrobatics.

The Ruggeds will be performing Adrenaline.

The breakdance crew previously appeared in singer Justin Bieber's music video, Where Are U Now.

Breakin' Convention will be curated and hosted by Jonzi D, who has previously directed shows including IVAN and rap theatre

piece Markus the Sadist.

Breakin' Convention will be at the Gulbenkian on May 28 and 29.

From 5pm on the Saturday and 1pm on the Sunday there will be a number of DJs, dancers, artists and MCs in the theatre's front of house spaces. Tickets to the performance are £12.50 for adults or £8.50 for children or students.

To find out more about the event you can visit the festival's website at www.breakinconvention.com or alternatively visit www.thegulbenkian.co.uk.



DANCE: Antoinette Gomis. All pictures: Paul Hampartsoumian



HIP HOP: Iron Skulls perform as post-apocalyptic survivors



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Good team spirit is key to cooking successfully

Gemma Dunn meets celebrated chef Nigel Mendham to discuss his passion for creating good food

MODERN British with a classical element is how Nigel Mendham likes to cook: "I start with the ingredients that are in season and then I come up with some ideas to create a dish around them," he explains.

When we meet, the celebrated chef is unruffled, low-key and ready to get the job done.

Preferring his cooking to do the talking, Mr Mendham's passion for creating delicious cuisine has been recognised by a number of accolades, including a Michelin star and three AA Rosettes for his stint at the prestigious Samling Hotel in the Lake District.

But it's his latest role, as executive

head chef at Dukes London's signature restaurant Thirty Six, that has given him a stage in the heart of the capital.

And for one day only, I get to do some chef's whites and share Mendham's podium - or at the least attempt to - for a one-off gourmet cookery lesson at the quintessential hotel in celebration of his latest venture, the British Larder menu.

Marrying seasonal ingredients, sourced from top British suppliers, with timeless culinary traditions, he explains the inspiration behind the project stems from "requests for simple, home-cooked food".

Mr Mendham's come up with some "British classics - with a twist", finding innovative ways to "put a differ-



TALENTED: Nigel Mendham

ent take on each dish to make it my own".

Drawing on his childhood - summers spent picking clams and crabbing on the Norfolk coast, before going home and cooking with his mother - nostalgic dishes on the menu include fish and chips, lobster thermidor and pineapple upside down cake. The latter of which I whip up during our masterclass, along with a mushroom consommé starter and venison main.

With natural flair, Mr Mendham makes it look easy, from his practical, hands-on technique to his light-hearted, motivational teaching.

He doesn't cut corners - "I love to cook on the stove as I think you get so much more flavour, plus it gives the

team more technical skill," he says.

Despite being "busy, busy all the time" he is sold on the premise that when it comes to cooking "you have to make it enjoyable, as good team spirit is key".

Of his dedicated team, he says: "Chefs are hard to find, so I prefer to take chefs that are at commi or demi chef level and train them up.

"As long as they are willing to learn, it's quite easy to train them. It takes time but it's very rewarding to watch someone grow as a chef."

And he means it.

After a morning in the kitchen, it was great to see just how far I'd come once the dishes were plated up - under Mr Mendham's pristine guidance, of course.

Tracy's dance mission

RENOWNED musical Hairspray will be performed at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley, from May 3 to 7.

Set in Baltimore in 1962, it tells the story of Tracy Turnblad, who is on a mission to dance her way on to national TV.

Her audition makes her a local star and she uses her new-found fame to help fight for equality.

Visit www.churchilltheatre.co.uk to book.

Julian Clary on stage

COMEDIAN Julian Clary will be bringing his new show, The Joy of Mincing, to Canterbury later this month.

He will be performing at the Marlowe Theatre on April 24.

The show starts at 7.30pm and it is suitable for those aged 16 and over.

Tickets are £23.

For more details, or to book, visit www.marlowetheatre.com.

The tale of Elle Woods

PRESENTED by the Kentish Players, Legally Blonde the Musical will be performed at the Central Theatre, Chatham.

It tells the story of homecoming queen Elle Woods, who enrolls at Harvard Law school after being dumped by her boyfriend.

It will run from June 29 to July 1, with performances at 2pm and 7.30pm.

To book you can visit www.tickets.medway.gov.uk.

A new stand-up show

PATRICK Monahan will be bringing his new stand-up show, The Disco Years, to Canterbury's Gulbenkian Theatre.

The show features his memories of being an immigrant to Britain.

It will be taking place on Thursday (April 7) at 7.30pm.

Tickets are £12 or £10 with concessions.

For further information you can visit www.thegulbenkian.co.uk.

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We are delighted to announce the launch of the Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards 2016



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NOMINATIONS are now being invited for the 2016 Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards. The awards dinner will take place at Ashford International Hotel on October 17 from 6.30pm to midnight.

The prestigious awards, which launched in 2013, are designed to champion, highlight and offer a showcase to the great and the good of the region's food and drink industry, including local producers and suppliers, small farming businesses, chefs, restaurants, pubs, cafes and hoteliers.

All will be people who care about the countryside and the future of our local environment.

The companies included will all be nominated by you, our Kent Life and Kent on Sunday readers.

We want to know if you've enjoyed a fantastic meal at your local pub or have been impressed by the produce

and service at your neighbourhood farmers' market or farm shop.

The nomination form is available here and will be repeated. It is also available to complete online at kentfda.co.uk, where you can read more about the awards and see pictures of last year's winners.

Entries close on August 7. Our handpicked panel of high-profile judges who all live or work in Kent will then select a shortlist, starting the independent judging process where finalists will be visited or interviewed to determine a worthy winner in each category.

All finalists will be invited to the prestigious awards ceremony, where they will enjoy a reception and three-course meal with wine before finding out if they are a winner.

This is our fourth Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards and we are immensely proud to be able to offer you once again the opportunity to reward and recognise

the deserving businesses within our local food and drink industry that go above and beyond expectations.

These awards are what you make of them so if you are the owner of a restaurant, a chef or local producer then spread the word among your clients, customers and visitors.

It takes no time at all to make your nomination. You can email, post or nominate online.

We are looking for quality over quantity, focusing on good comments rather than simply the number of nominations received, so everybody is in with a chance no matter how big or small their business.

■ Don't forget to let us know when you have made your recommendation on our Twitter page @kentlife and @KOSMedia by using #kentfda – similarly, if you are looking for nominations, please use this hashtag

Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards 2016 Nomination Form

Nominate your Kent food and drink favourites by using this form or email us at kentfda@archant.co.uk

Please post your entry form to:
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Ashford TN23 1PP

Or you can email us at:
kentfda@archant.co.uk

Copies of the form and posters to advertise your entry are available ___at www.kent-life.co.uk and at www.kentnews.co.uk.

The closing date for entries is Sunday, August 7, 2016

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Chef of the Year Sponsored by the Canterbury Auction Galleries Who? Where? Why?	Customer Service of the Year Sponsored by Fenwick Canterbury Who? Where? Why?	Kent Food & Drink Hero of the Year Who? Where? Why?

NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR



This popular category is open to anyone in the food and drink industry who has started a new venture within the last 18 months.

We want to know what impact they have made on the local community and if they have started to achieve any success further afield.

Are they helping to promote Kent food and drink to a new audience or have they found a new way to promote an old favourite?

INDEPENDENT FOOD OR DRINK RETAILER OF THE YEAR



This celebrates that special food or drink shop that we all treasure.

The retailer who includes wonderful local produce in their offering and knows where all their stock comes from to make that special link between field and plate.

Our winner will have a special 'must-have' range as well as making a real contribution to their local community.

Paying a visit to their shop will be a treat in itself.

CAFE OF THE YEAR

This category has changed from the previous Tea Shop of the Year to include places that also specialise in coffee! Tea and coffee shops are an integral part of the Kent food and

drink scene. Who makes the best tea and coffees, serves the nicest cakes and biscuits and the freshest scones? Are the sandwiches freshly cut and liberally filled?

Most importantly, are most of the ingredients locally sourced? We look forward to hearing your favourites.

FOOD PRODUCER OF THE YEAR



This category celebrates our local producers.

We are looking for someone who consistently provides both top quality local produce and service to their customers.

We are also keen to hear of any innovations.

If they're doing something new, we'd like to hear about it.

So if your local baker, grocer or farmer delights then please let us know.

DRINK PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

This category celebrates our local drink producers.

Whether it's gorgeous Kentish fizz or delicious juice, we want to find the producers who play such a vital role in the county's food and drink economy.

We want to know who you think makes the best drink, alcoholic or not, in the county, and what it is that makes it so special.

We are keen to hear of any innovations, so if they're doing something new, for example, introducing a fabulous new flavour, then we would like to all hear about it.

FARM SHOP OF THE YEAR

A good farm shop needs to have that extra-special something to tempt farmers away from their local supermarkets.

Are the staff friendly and knowledgeable, is the range of produce and the layout of an excellent standard, does your local farm shop offer a box scheme?

Is most of the produce sold there grown or raised on that farm, or nearby and if not would the owner be able to tell you where it is from?

Nominate your favourite farm shop now.

FARMERS' MARKET OF THE YEAR



The key to a good farmers' market is not only the range of produce and the quality of its stalls but also the principles that it supports - for example, does it work as a co-operative with other farmers? Is most of the produce sold there grown or raised locally? Are the stallholders welcoming and knowledgeable? Let us know so we can tell everyone the best place to go.

PUB OF THE YEAR



A good pub these days has to offer more than a warm welcome and excellent ale. We're looking for an inn that also offers delicious locally-sourced food, fantastic

customer service and real value for money. Pubs are genuinely the hub of their local community.

If you know a great one, even if it isn't your local, let us all know.

RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR



The Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Restaurant of the Year needs to offer an incomparable

dining experience, from the ambience to the service and most importantly the food. Is it locally sourced? Do they support local producers and are they recognised on the menu? Do they have local as well as international wines and champagnes and can the staff tell you more if you ask?

CHEF OF THE YEAR



Kent is blessed with some outstanding chefs working in a fantastic array of restaurants. The Chef of the Year should be someone who has devoted him or herself to serving the best possible food. They'll demonstrate technical ability, use of seasonal ingredients, presentation of the food and an understanding of how flavours work together. Above all, we are looking for passion - that magic ingredient that defines true greatness in the kitchen.

CUSTOMER SERVICE OF THE YEAR



Most of our awards recognise customer

service in some form. This category celebrates this vital element for its own sake.

Do you know a person, organisation or establishment that offers fabulous service that goes above and beyond what you expect?

We all know excellent service when we have received it, now is your chance to get it recognised. If you know a person, company, producer, pub, shop or restaurant that is a delight to deal with, then let us know.

KENT FOOD AND DRINK HERO OF THE YEAR

Kent has a food and drink scene that is among the most vibrant in the UK - as you would expect from the Garden of England.

As well as being blessed with some of the final local produce around, the county also has a variety of fantastic eateries located in local towns and villages.

This category will be celebrating the individual who has made a positive impact on the county's food or drink community.

Do you know someone who goes the extra mile in order to help promote Kent to a wider audience?

Someone who has shown that they are passionate about local produce throughout?

Now is the chance for you to nominate your very own Kent Food and Drink hero and give them the recognition that they deserve.

Get in contact with us and let us know who you think would be a worthy winner.

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How right you are Mary

HOW right Mary McNulty is, while our pseudo Christian religions stand by doing very little, even helping in the spreading of secularism, true Christianity is dying!

Christ told of these times in Matthew 24 and also mentioned the false prophets who would 'mislead' people!

Many other books in the New Testament take up this same theme and amplify it!

As we know from 1 John 5:19 'the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one', that was why Satan could take Christ to the top of a mountain and offer him the Kingdoms of the world! Matthew 4:8-9

Our leaders wring their hands at the pangs of distress of the world!

They have no understanding of scripture, of the truth, of God and of how things were meant to be before greedy, selfish, ignorant people decided they knew better than God himself!

It all started with Adam and Eve, who thought they knew better and the rest of the Bible is a good guide on why we're getting it so wrong!

Phil Granger
 West Malling

Go with Windsor not dictatorship

IF IT wasn't for informative newspaper comment, the EU referendum discussion would be limited to politicians and business leaders who are very partial and have an extremely poor record on such matters – examples include predicting disaster if we didn't join the European currency and the adopting of human rights laws.

The first example would have sunk the pound and Britain with it, while the second example means that we are not in control of our borders and cannot expel such unwanted as Abahanzi without enormous difficulties.

So if we cannot trust the judgement of the afore mentioned and are considering "a leap into the dark" like renewing our "marriage vows with Europe" then we have to decide on issues that surround us.

Bacon advertising appears to have disappeared – schools are being advised not to serve "bangers

LETTER OF THE WEEK



United in opposition to plan for academies

PEOPLE often say to locally elected politicians that they don't like party politics and call on us all "to work together" for the good of the community.

They would have been delighted by the recent meeting of the Kent County Council when Conservatives, Labour, Liberal Democrats, UKIP and Greens were all of one accord in opposing the Government plan to make all state schools into academies.

The Leader of the Council, Paul Carter, made it clear that the policy ran counter to the Government's approach to devolution and was based on a fallacy that local authorities some how strangle progress in our schools.

My own experience in senior school management was that LEAs do not run schools but they do provide essential support whilst county councillors have often been effective advocates for parents with

concerns about schools.

Our leader in the Labour Group, Gordon Cowan, said that a full scale academy programme would undermine objectives such as fair admissions and providing support for school improvement.

He said that there was no evidence that academies were a better option and pointed out the rapid demise of the Hextable Academy, near Swanley.

Teachers and parents are right to be concerned about this concentration of education management around central government.

It is about power, not education. It is about abandoning long held principles in providing public services fairly to meet the needs of all. It will lead to abuse and it will make it harder than ever to tackle educational inequality.

Roger Truelove, deputy leader of the Labour Group on Kent County Council, County Hall, Maidstone

and mash" – the death by stabbing of a Muslim shop keeper who wished his "adopted Christian country" a Happy Easter – the progress of the migrant tsunami which is sinking Greece, Turkey, Macedonia and others, has conveniently disappeared from news programs in preference to government being urged to protect animal conditions in small mobile zoos.

Much is made of the EU 500 million population as a potential market – but no one explains the relevance of this enormous

marketplace to a "fish and chip shop", a "hairdresser" or a "boutique" in the high street, who are all forced into extra red tape and costly regulations because our politicians adopt all laws from Brussels (whether relevant or not).

Can you name your EU MP? Most can't and most don't understand that the EU is "a bureaucrat dictatorship by design" resulting in your EU MP (regardless of name and party) having little influence and no real say.

We are a proud democracy with

Queen Elizabeth as head of state. Many might be puzzled why we want to continue to be part of the European experiment now that it has changed from a trading organisation to a political dictatorship.

If we are to continue as one of the world's greatest democracies – let's stick with Buckingham Palace and Windsor – and forgo the uncertainties of the EU which appears to be sinking under migrant and monetary influences.

Edward La Coste,
 Lamberhurst,

Only we can save the planet

G WALKER (Kent on Sunday 28/03/2016), raised the question "Should we ditch our confidence in faith".

I have no problem with anyone who practices a faith, as long as it does not impact the planet.

A number of faiths took to the streets in Brussels to mourn together and in peace following the bombing in the city, but it cannot be denied that man has only inhabited this planet for less than 100,000 years, with systematic intolerance of another's beliefs, and repeated episodes of war and cruelty.

What mankind does not seem to be able to get to grips with, is its disastrous effect on the environment, which no deity can ameliorate.

We are faced with an explosion in population, and rape of the environment in general.

We should work with nature, and not destroy it.

If we destroy nature, the food chain breaks down, and billions of people will suffer from starvation.

It is very likely that the terrible Syrian situation stemmed from an impoverished environment causing desperate people to migrate, with all the problems migration causes.

We should respect nature and make sure that coming generations can live in a healthy and happy environment, with sufficient food to sustain them.

We should not consider mankind has the moral right to plunder the natural world.

Reliance on religion is not the answer.

Only we can save the planet. Have we the will?

Jean Nobbs,
 Sevenoaks

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles

Kent on Sunday will:

- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.
- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to

people living in the county.

9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.

10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.



Cottington Lakes, near Deal

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By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

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MARK II: The second generation Tiguan is bigger inside and out with more adventurous design and trim

Tiguan – VW's expensive bargain

PREVIEW: The Tiguan has been popular despite its high price – can the new Mark II continue the 'reassuringly expensive' success story?

RATHER in the way that Stella Artois used to be marketed as 'reassuringly expensive', VW's Tiguan has delivered value at a higher price.

This shows when owners come to sell this well-built SUV and find they can claw back a big chunk of their original outlay.

And while cheaper rivals can challenge the Tiguan for style, quality and practicality – such as the Skoda Yeti and Ford Kuga – surely only badge snobbery would tempt anyone to look at dearer BMW and Audi models?

Launched in 2008 with a moniker combining tiger with 'leguan' – German for an iguana – the Tiguan now makes way for a Mark II claimed to offer more cabin space plus up to 25 per cent better fuel efficiency.

Interior trimming and style also look more adventurous than before.

However, the space gains come from a bigger on-road footprint: 60mm longer and 30mm wider, with the wheelbase stretched by 77mm to 2,681mm

Boot capacity is up too, by 145 litres to 615 with rear seats in place, or 1,655 litres when folded.

Diesel power is currently the only engine option, mated with six-speed manual or optional six or seven-speed dual-clutch DSG transmission – VW's clever auto 'box that delivers all the



driving fun of a manual.

But VW will offer a plug-in petrol-electric hybrid later, using a 154bhp 1.4-litre petrol engine plus electric motor for a lively combined output of 215bhp and possible range of 575 miles.

As before, front-wheel drive and 4x4 are both offered, with the latter variants featuring

200mm ground clearance – 11mm better than front-driven models. With a nod to the previous Tiguan's Escape version, Mark II 4x4 models are offered with an off-road package that brings a reworked front bumper to increase the approach angle from 18.3 degrees to 25.6 degrees.

Prices to be confirmed.

Kia Ceed - the marque's game changer

Other Kias outsell the Ceed, but the family hatch series made the hard yards to transform the Korean brand's image, writes **Steve Loader...**

KIA'S latest version of its Sportage SUV top seller has just hit showrooms. The previous model re-cast the Korean brand in the eyes of UK consumers, switching it from value brand to one with growing desirability and style.

But Kia's No3 seller, the Ceed (from £14,805) did all the hard work behind the scenes on quality, reliability and design and spawned a successful family of cars: the five-door hatchback, SW estate and spin-off Procee three-door hatchback coupe.

The original Ceed hatch (2007-12) was Kia's first car designed for Europe and built there – at a state-of-the-art plant in Slovakia – and the brand's confidence in the car was such that it pioneered the seven-year/100,000-mile warranty that now covers all Kias.

The Mark II raised the game yet again, being wholly designed by Kia's German design guru Peter Schreyer, creator of the original Audi TT.

The Ceed Mark II is an elegant car and one of the most spacious in class for passengers and their luggage, and Kia has concentrated on delivering the best comfort, in partnership with a good driving experience, fine-



tuned by a facelift last year.

As a result, only the keenest drivers will have a quarrel with the Ceed, the vast majority being happy at how it soaks up bumps on our increasingly poor UK roads.

The facelift included introduction of a turbocharged 1.0-litre three-cylinder petrol engine, a format that

would not have been countenanced a few years ago, but is now seen as key in the fight back against diesel, thanks to its light weight, potential frugality and low emissions.

It still has the characteristic uneven beat of a three-pot engine, but this is muted and the unit proved responsive in all conditions, though I



fear that the need to rev it even in normal traffic conditions means that the quoted combined cycle 57.6mpg is far from realistic – the car's computer showed my averages were in the mid-30s.

Nevertheless, combined with a swift-changing six-speed gearbox, it would be an attractive option if not

Kia Ceed 1.0 T-GDi GT-Line Eco

Price:	from £19,720
Driving appeal:	★★★★
Image:	★★★★
Space:	★★★★
Value:	★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Best rival:	Mazda 3

for the premium price, starting at £17,805; you could have a Ceed diesel of similar performance and spec, with better economy, for about the same money.

But there is plenty of other powertrain choice across the Ceed range, plus the option of a DCT (dual-clutch transmission) gearbox offering the best of both smooth manual and automatic gear selection.

Specifications for the new look Ceed line-up are impressive and typically generous too, including the racy GT-Line trim, as fitted to the test car. This includes distinctive 'ice-cube' LED daytime running lights and deeper bumpers on the front, side sill mouldings, bespoke alloys, wider rear bumper and twin exhausts, and a smart and sporty interior



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Personal contract hire offer on Corsa Limited Edition 1.4i 75PS ecoFLEX, 3-Door in Flame Red with Advanced Park Assist and Bi-Xenon headlights, on orders received before 30 June 2016, subject to availability and status. Age 18+ only. Figures based on a non-maintenance contract hire package with advance rental of £2,704, then 35 monthly rentals of £169. Excess miles over contracted mileage of 24,000 over 36 months charged at 6.64 pence per mile. Excess charges also apply if you breach manufacturer servicing or maintenance guidelines or if the car exceeds BVRLA Fair Wear & Tear guidelines for its age/mileage when it is returned to Vauxhall Leasing. Package includes Road Fund Licence and Vauxhall Assistance. Guarantee/indemnity may be required. Prices and details are subject to change without notice. For full specification and Ts&Cs contact your local Retailer. **You will not own the car.** ALD Automotive Ltd., trading as Vauxhall Leasing, B516 3JA. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. †First year insurance offer available on Corsa Limited Edition only, excluding Red and Black Editions. All drivers must have held a valid full UK licence for a minimum of 1 year. All policies are underwritten by Agas Insurance Ltd. Other insurance specific Ts&Cs apply. Drivers aged 18-20 will make a contribution of £99 to their premium and must agree to the fitting of a telematics box to the car; every 3 months, your contribution will be reviewed and if you drive well, we will return part of this to you. The policy may be cancelled for excessive speeding or consistently poor driving. Only available through ingenie. The offer will cover the full premium for drivers aged between 21-75 (motor policy only). Only available through Vauxhall Insurance. #MPG figures are official test data and may not reflect real driving results. Correct at time of going to press.

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Kent on Sunday

KENT LIFE

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Qualifications and Experience

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Telephone: 01304 222690

E-mail: **recruitment@spencerhospitals.com**

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LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 NOTICE UNDER ARTICLE 13 OF APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

Proposed development at: Land east of Ashford Road, Ashford Road, New Romney, Kent

Take notice that an application is being made by: Carter Jonas on behalf of Gladman Developments Ltd.

For planning permission to: Outline application for up to 117 dwellings, new proposed vehicular access arrangements, parking, flood attenuation, open space including the retention of the 0.7 hectares of existing playing fields and associated works.

Local Planning Authority to whom the application is being submitted: Shepway District Council, Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, CT20 2QY

Any owner of the land or tenant who wishes to make representations about this application should write to the council within 21 days of the date of this notice.

Date: 30th March 2016

Statement of owners' rights: The grant of planning permission does not affect owners' rights to retain or dispose of their property, unless there is some provision to the contrary in an agreement or lease.

Statement of agricultural tenants' rights: The grant of planning permission for non-agricultural development may affect agricultural tenants' security of tenure.

'Owner' means a person having a freehold interest or a leasehold interest the unexpired term of which is not less than seven years. 'Tenant' means a tenant of an agricultural holding any part of which is comprised in the land.

Eagles pick up Margate striker

Freddie Ladapo signed for the Premier League side this week

Football

By Luke May

luke.may@archant.co.uk

PREMIER League strugglers Crystal Palace have signed one of Margate's young talents this week.

Gate striker Freddie Ladapo signed for the eagles this week after a successful season with the east Kent side.

The former-Colchester striker had been linked with a move away from Margate in January, with interest reportedly from Dagenham & Redbridge and Grimsby Town, but teammates were delighted to see the player stay on for most of the season.

Ladapo joined Nikki Hunt's side from Kidderminster Harriers in 2015, scoring 23 goals in just under 50 games.

And he scored the first goal of the manager's reign at the club, in a 1-0 win against Gosport in December.

But following a trial with the east London club, Ladapo impressed boss Alan Pardew, scoring a hat-trick in an under 21s match for the eagles.

The move comes the week after Margate's former chairman Bob Laslett stepped down.

Mr Laslett passed on the role to former director John Webb, who has been involved with the club's youth for the past two years.

Ladapo joins Pardew's side facing a relegation battle.

Despite a strong start to the season and big-name signings including former Arsenal and Manchester City forward Emmanuel Adebayor, Crystal Palace have not won a league game this year, and now find themselves in 16th place, seven points



SIGNED: Freddie Ladapo played nearly 50 games for Margate

Picture: ARCHANT

clear of Sunderland.

The 23-year-old leaves Hartsdown Park with Margate in the middle of a bad run of form, without a win in their last seven games.

A statement on the club's website read: "Freddie's most accomplished display while in a Gate shirt was un-

doubtedly this season as he shone in Margate's 2-1 away win at Ebbsfleet United.

"Everyone at Margate Football Club would like to thank Freddie for his contribution to Margate over the past 14 months and wish him the very best for future endeavours."

All square at Ebbsfleet in north Kent derby

Football

NORTH Kent's promotion hopefuls battled it out on Easter Monday as Ebbsfleet United hosted Dartford.

Nearly 2,500 fans watched on from the stands as the home side aims to win the National League South title.

League-leaders and play-off pushers failed to find a rhythm in a cagey start to the match, with both teams struggling to get control of the ball in the strong-winds.

As the first half drew to a close, Fleet striker Matt Godden picked up the ball on the edge of the Dartford box, batting off attention from defenders.

Godden cut inside, loosing a shot that arrowed into the right hand



HOME: Ebbsfleet United's Stonebridge Road

corner past Ibrahim to give the home side the lead.

Before the close of the half, the Darts keeper was called into action again moments later, as Godden's first time touch failed to connect properly with an Aaron McLean pass.

Coming out for the second half, Dartford came straight back into the game as they continue their bid to return to the National League.

Two minutes in, a move from the away-side found Ryan Hayes in space.

His first shot was matched by Nathan Ashmore between the sticks, but the winger managed to tap in the rebound.

The result leaves Ebbsfleet five points clear of second place Maidstone United, who have two games in hand, while Dartford are three points off the play-off places heading into this weekend's games.

Sport Shorts

» Email sports@kosmedia.co.uk or call Jamie Weir on 01233 653481

Gills to host side that beat them 4-1 last year

PLAY-OFF hopefuls Gillingham will entertain Coventry City this weekend.

Four months on from the crushing 4-1 defeat to the Sky Blues, Justin Edinburgh's side will be looking to pick up points as they chase Burton and Wigan in the automatic promotion places.

Following their win on Monday, the Gills are currently fourth in League One, eight points off second-placed Wigan.

With a game in hand the side has a chance to walk into the Championship without the risk of the play-offs.

When the two sides last met, four goals inside 10 minutes, including a hat-trick from Coventry's on-loan striker Jacob Murphy dealt the Gills their heaviest defeat of the season.

But Tony Mowbray's Coventry side have only managed to pick up two away wins in the league since the two sides last met in November.

Gillingham will host 10th placed Coventry City at the MEMS Priestfield Stadium at 3pm today (Saturday).



HOME: Gills take on Coventry



TOGETHER: 10-year-old Tazmin Pearson riding D'Amour D'Amerrier

Deal girl wins grand prix at national show

A DEAL schoolgirl made easy work of the competition at a national showjumping competition.

Ten-year-old Tazmin Pearson came top out of 24 competitors, finishing a jump-off in 28.48 secs.

Tazmin won the 11-year-old and under grand prix at Bury Farm Equestrian Village in Buckinghamshire where the Pony of the Year Show was held across the

four-day Easter weekend.

Rider Tazmin commented on the partnership between her and her nine-year-old blue roan mare, D'Amour D'Amerrier.

She said: "Sometimes she's very hard to turn, but today was the best we've ever done."

Tazmin inherited the nine-year-old mare from her cousin and owner Jodie Randall 18 months ago.

Margate star Kent's number one

A MARGATE youngster has been selected as Kent's number one for lawn tennis.

Mia Otley, 8, has taken the number one spot in the county-wide rankings for her age group.

Having trained through the coaching system at Margate Lawn Tennis Club, the club is looking for the young talent to meet her promising level of potential.

Head coach Gavid Wickers said: "Mia has trained and competed very hard and now has the ranking she deserves."

"I often observe Mia's skills now and compare them to when she first started, it gives me and my tennis leaders a huge sense of pride."

"We help drive the essential motivation that is helping our other juniors to reach their potential."

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ONLY ONE! 50%

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ONLY ONE! 60%

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ONLY ONE! 80%

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ONLY ONE! 75%

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ONLY ONE! 80%

Bedroom Furniture

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Penshurst tall boy

mrrp £1,280 now £549

ONLY ONE! 55%

Camden 2 drawer bedside chest

mrrp £500 now £100

ONLY ONE! 80%

Stratford two door wardrobe by Lawrence Walsh

mrrp £1,695 now £675

ONLY ONE! 60%

Stratford two door wardrobe with additional shelf unit

mrrp £2,785 now £1,095

ONLY ONE! 63%

Lounge & Dining Room Furniture

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